THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING RESEARCH 2022
Foreword: Professor Chris Ennew OBE

Dear <first name>,

Thank you so much for giving to the University of Warwick. This annual report demonstrates how you are creating lasting value in society and the economy through supporting research. Pandemic planning, children’s health, astronomy, sustainability, and fair access to education are just some of the areas where your generosity is making a difference. Thanks to you, teams of academics can work across disciplines to solve major global problems.

As Provost, I lead the academic community here at Warwick, and I’d like to remind you about Warwick’s strong performance in the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021) results. Your support has contributed towards this achievement. REF2021 is an assessment of the work of all researchers, in all departments, in all universities by hundreds of assessors – world leaders in their fields. A remarkable 50% of our submitted research was awarded the highest possible rating of ‘world leading’ (4 stars). A further 42% is ‘internationally excellent’ (3 stars). In the mid-1960s, Warwick had just a few hundred students and today we are recognised as one of UK’s research powerhouses. Please be proud of this achievement and share the news with your networks.

There are sectors of our society that find it difficult to access academia. In this report, you’ll see how your donations are helping people who would not ordinarily think about becoming academics and giving them the confidence to succeed in research careers. For example, through PhD scholarships, fellowships for early career researchers, and the Undergraduate Research Support Scheme, which enables Warwick undergraduate students to complete an interdisciplinary summer research project.

I’m inspired by the real-world difference your generosity is making to people’s lives. Thank you for caring and we promise to keep you updated on the impact of your giving.

Best Wishes,
Professor Chris Ennew OBE
Provost

PS. We’d love to hear your feedback on the report so please keep in touch by emailing Jo Clark, Senior Donor Relations Manager at: jo.clark@warwick.ac.uk

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING GIVING DAY

Thank you to all donors who supported Giving Day, the Warwick community’s celebration of philanthropy that falls in May each year. More than 260 of you raised £182,673 for students, research and the arts at Warwick.

Your support for research will transform the way that we all understand this world, and perhaps worlds beyond this planet, creating lives that are healthier, safer, more resilient, just, and fulfilled.

We’d love to hear what you thought of Giving Day and feature some of our donor community in your alumni and friends newsletter, on social media and in future reports. Please get in touch by emailing benefactors@warwick.ac.uk and share what inspired your support.

Scan the QR code to watch a video about research at Warwick released on Giving Day
£3.5 million donation helps aspiring astronomers reach for the stars

Warwick has received a £3.5 million philanthropic gift to astrophysics to recruit and support the next generation of astronomers in exploring the furthest reaches of our universe.

The private philanthropic donation from a Warwick alumnus is one of the largest gifts ever towards the study of astronomy and astrophysics in the UK. It will support a pipeline of talent, from postgraduate study up to early career research fellows, allowing the University’s Astronomy and Astrophysics Group to further boost its already excellent research profile. Up to 15 PhD scholarships and approximately 13 research fellowships will be recruited over the next few years.

The gift recognises the world-leading work in astronomy and astrophysics taking place at the University, with the aim of investing in research with the potential to achieve the level of science’s highest honours, such as the Nobel Prize, within the coming decades.

Did you know?

A new observatory for astronomy research and teaching will soon be opening on campus. The observatory will provide hands-on experience of operating telescopes for astrophysics students, as well as serving as a showcase University facility that can be used for outreach, public engagement activities, and local participation. Here’s a sneak peek of the building.

Researcher spotlight: Dr Lauren Doyle

About me: As a post-doctoral fellow, my main role is research. I'm also really involved in the outreach programme that we have to encourage young people, which involves going to schools to give both talks and demonstrations as well as running full days for families. Astronomy is a tangible science in that you can look up to the stars, see them under night sky with no specialist equipment which means that people really relate to learning about astronomy. I’m passionate about giving back to young people and trying to inspire future generations.

What giving means to me: Your philanthropy towards astrophysics is exciting because it will enable more people like me to join one of the UK’s biggest astronomy departments. As a young girl, I really looked up to people who studied space and astronomy and that fuelled my desire to pursue this type of career. Your giving to Warwick's research is unlocking the potential for a new generation to discover their passions. With the speed astronomy has progressed at over the past few years, it’s exciting to think what the next generation of astronomers will discover!
A generous legacy gift is supporting a clinical trial in the Centre for Early Life to help ensure the best outcomes for babies who are large for their gestational age at birth.

The gift is allowing researchers from disciplines ranging from obstetrics and psychology to health economics to work together on a unique study with important implications for birth management and child development.

Having a big baby (anticipated birth weight in the top 90% for the woman’s BMI, ethnicity and number of previous babies) has risks for both mother and baby. One rare but important problem is shoulder dystocia. This means, after the head has been born, one of the baby’s shoulders becomes stuck behind the women pelvic bone, delaying the birth of the baby’s body.

Most babies that have experienced shoulder dystocia at birth will have no long-term complications. But for some babies shoulder dystocia can cause a stretching in the nerves of the neck, which may cause long-term weakness in the arm. Rarely, delay in delivery can lead to lack of oxygen at birth and long term disability.

The Big Baby trial is looking to find out if inducing labour earlier than the usual 40 week, at 38 weeks, makes it less likely that shoulder dystocia will happen in women whose babies appear to be bigger than expected for the mother’s size and ethnicity. Recent research has suggested that being born two weeks early may adversely affect cognitive abilities such as problem solving or language skills. What is unknown is, whether this affects bigger babies in the same way as small babies.

Now, thanks to a legacy gift from alumnus Jack Straw (BSc Mathematics and Economics, 1969-72), researchers are looking at the cognitive and language function of babies born to women participating in the Big Baby Trial when they reach two years old. They will do this by asking 1,500 mothers to complete an online questionnaire. The survey includes the PARCA-R (Parent Report of Children’s Abilities-Revised) questionnaire and also collects data regarding the baby’s health, feeding and sleeping alongside the mother’s quality of life, incontinence status and health resource use.

The Big Baby 2up project began in May 2022 and information from more than 50 participants has been collected so far. The researchers hope the analysis of the data collected in Big Baby 2Up will help indicate if the potential cognitive deficits associated with near-term birth are present in big babies.

The Big Baby 2 Up project is a collaboration between Warwick Medical School, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust, and the Department of Psychology. Thanks to Jack’s support, a new research fellow is being recruited to work on the project as part of a multi-disciplinary team.

Professor of Obstetrics, Siobhan Quenby, said: “It’s important that pregnant women, their partners, midwives and obstetricians have evidence-based information to be able to discuss and make informed decisions about the timing of birth if their baby is predicted to be above the 90th centile on the fetal growth chart. The results of this clinical trial will help balance the risk of stillbirth, shoulder dystocia, maternal and neonatal morbidity, and babies’ longer-term cognitive function. We are so grateful that Jack’s legacy gift has made it possible.”

Did you know?

Jack’s legacy gift is also supporting Quiz Soc, which recruits and trains our University Challenge Team each year.
Donor spotlight: Raphael Bonacci
MSc Economics and Finance, 2002-03

About me: After graduating, I worked in Paris and London, initially at investment banks, focusing on consumer and technology, then at corporate organisations on acquisitions and strategic initiatives. After further studies in the US, I now work as a strategist in Seoul, South Korea, at one of the world’s largest consumer electronics and technology firms.

My favourite Warwick memories: Besides the academic curriculum and research at Warwick, the vibrant social scene and cultural activities stood out as key attractions. Growing up in a very international environment already, I was really impressed by the diversity of other students attending Warwick. The campus was stunning, and I liked stopping by the Arts Centre between classes.

What giving means to me: After receiving communications about Warwick Giving Day recently, I started doing research about the scholarship programmes. As I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to attend my chosen education, I felt compelled that anyone else should also be able to do so, irrespective of their socio-economic background and financial needs. I continue to feel inspired by Warwick’s emphasis on innovation and inclusion, as well as its strong international outlook and positive impact on the community.

Gift made in honour of prestigious academic will progress antimicrobial resistance research

Antimicrobial resistance research at Warwick can progress at pace thanks to a £1.7 million gift made in recognition of the globally renowned scientist, Professor Sir Howard Dalton FRS.

The gift was made by the late Sir Howard’s former student Dr David Stirling (PhD Biosciences, 2002-2007) and will pump prime a flexible fund to enable retaining, training and capacity building of core skills and capabilities in mechanistic enzymology, a key focus for drug discovery.

Sir Howard was part of the Warwick academic community from 1973 until he passed away in 2008, serving in many senior positions and taking a secondment as Chief Scientific Advisor to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs from 1999-2002. He is fondly remembered for his excellence as a globally renowned enzymologist.

Professor Chris Dowson, Co-Director of the new Centre, said: “The Sir Howard Dalton Centre for (Translational) Mechanistic Enzymology will foster international collaboration and develop a new pipeline of talent. We’re sure David’s gift will inspire further support for the Centre and early career fellowships, kick-starting funding of up to £14 million towards a full National Centre of Excellence that will also have strong connections globally, to help tackle antimicrobial resistance and train the next generation of leaders.”

David, Co-Founder of the pharmaceutical company Celgene, first supported research at Warwick with a fantastic $250,000 gift to antimicrobial resistance research on Giving Day 2021. Thanks to this gift, a Warwick-Monash Fellow has been recruited to study genetically engineered bacteriophages (viruses that infect bacteria) as treatment for intracellular Salmonella typhi infection.

David said: “I have many fond memories of studying at Warwick, supervised by Howard, and wanted to give back to support an area of research that I think is critically important.”
Warwick vs Pandemics

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, your fantastic support helped create an interdisciplinary research institute at Warwick to tackle future pandemics. Eighteen months on, the Institute of Global Pandemic Planning (IGPP) is going from strength to strength.

The Institute combines world-class expertise to develop comprehensive solutions for global leaders struggling to respond to the health, social, economic and psychological impacts of pandemics. After donors gave more than £3 million in just eight months to support the Institute, the first six of 30 new PhD pandemic research scholars have gained technical skills during a year of taught modules and have now embarked on their doctoral studies.

An additional three scholars with experience including medicine, artificial intelligence and data science, and virology, will join in the Autumn. All scholars are part of a new network of international PhD students who will act as ambassadors for Warwick’s scientific approach and feed key learnings back into their respective countries.

Over the past year the PhD students have received bespoke leadership and communication training and an online knowledge hub to share learning with researchers and policymakers worldwide has been developed.

Donor spotlight: Clive Gillmore

About me: I studied Management Sciences at Warwick Business School from 1979-82. I’m now CEO, Group CIO and Founding Partner of Mondrian Investment Partners. At Warwick, my support has established both the Gillmore Centre for Financial Technology and the Clive Gillmore PhD Scholarships in the Institute for Global Pandemic Planning. My fellow alumnus Keith Skeoch (MSc Economics 1978-79) is also a principal donor behind the PhD scholarships.

What giving means to me: Warwick’s interdisciplinary, collegiate research environment was one of the motivators for me establishing the Fintech centre and in supporting the new Institute for Global Pandemic Planning. The same strengths are as much, if not more, important to my support for the IGPP.
The scholars are working on...

- Considering the vulnerable in pandemic response particularly people living with diabetes in Nigeria
- The use of digital tools in surveillance for infectious diseases in countries in Africa
- Modelling of infectious disease spread in different geographical locations with different interventions
- Understanding the effectiveness of non-pharmaceutical interventions; information processing and compliance to public health guidance during a pandemic
- Integrating behaviour into epidemiological models using non-health data (mobile spending and mobility data).

“COVID-19 has demonstrated the impact infectious disease epidemics and pandemics can have on everyone’s lives. Science has a critical part to play in reducing this impact, and the work of the IGPP is directly related to informing pandemic planning, preparation, response and recovery.”

Dr Nicole Robb, Associate Professor, Institute for Global Pandemic Planning.

Researcher spotlight: Ankit Shanker

About me: I’m a PhD student at the Institute for Global Pandemic Planning. My research lies at the intersection of behavioural science and pandemic planning. I’m interested in understanding human behaviour and how we can bring about interventions to persuade people to comply more with public health policy measures.

What giving means to me: The Covid pandemic was unprecedented, and research can help ensure that we are better prepared if something like this ever happens again. Thank you so much for your support. You’ve brought research leaders from around the world together to create an inclusive research network. My scholarship has massively contributed to my potential that I don’t have to worry about monetary barriers now, I can just focus on my research and its impact.
Machine learning and AI help diagnose brain cancer in children

Machine learning is helping improve survival rates for children diagnosed with brain tumours thanks to interdisciplinary research at Warwick.

Professor Theo Arvanitis and his team use Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning on images obtained from MRI scans so they can characterise different types of tumours with greater precision and accuracy than afforded by the human eye.

Combining this with data from Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy, a scanning technique which provides a non-invasive ‘window’ on biochemical processes within the tumour, creates a fuller picture of the disease in individuals.

When assessing a brain tumour, an oncologist usually considers its size and location. Theo’s research is expanding the scope of analysis to include other factors such as the texture and density of tissue and the quantities of tumour-related metabolites (chemicals making changes in its cells), which helped improve the tumour classification at an earlier stage.

Historically, this type of diagnoses has been done through biopsies. However, these can be costly and carry a greater risk for young children, making an alternative, non-invasive approach even more important. “Through this research, my team and I have brought the worlds of clinical science and engineering together, innovating in a way that has enabled us to play a significant role in improving survival rates of children with a brain tumour,” Theo said.

“When I started this research project in 2004, survival rates in the UK sat between 45-65%, depending on the type of tumour. The latest data indicates that more than 75% of patients now live beyond five years.”

New facilities for the world’s best thinkers

Theo’s work is an example of researchers working across boundaries and using their expertise to find the best solutions for patient care.

To work in a collaborative way to solve problems, the world’s best thinkers need the best facilities.

Plans are underway to build a Science Precinct to help reimagine the future of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) at Warwick. The new collection of interdisciplinary teaching and research facilities will have space for collaboration, innovation and enjoyment.

Your philanthropy will support the creation of a public engagement hub within this space to absorb people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities in research.

Dr Kerry Baker, Associate Director of the Warwick Institute of Engagement, said: “The STEM Grand Challenge will create a wonderful, dedicated space through which to share our knowledge and research, so funds helping deliver this will have a very real impact.”
Scholar spotlight: Rebecca Preedy

Name: Rebecca Preedy (BA Ancient History and Classical Archaeology with Study in Europe, 2021).

About me: I stayed on at Warwick after completing my BA, and am studying for a Masters in the Ancient Visual and Material Culture of Rome. Last summer, I took part in the Undergraduate Research Support Scheme (URSS). The scheme enables undergraduate students to complete an interdisciplinary summer research project, supported by a bursary. I travelled to Athens, Greece, to undertake research on the city of Eleusis, home to one of the most influential and ancient cults. I also worked on a public engagement project creating Roman time-capsules containing objects associated with Roman Coventry to help local children develop an interest in archaeology and the Romans.

The impact of URSS: Experiencing the site of Eleusis first-hand is invaluable to researching Greek religion as the geography of the site largely contributes to the spirituality and sensation of the cult. I was able to undertake my own modern pilgrimage mirroring the ancient practice, starting at the Sacred Way in the Kerameikos, travelling along the sea, and arriving at the gates to the sanctuary.

Did you know?

Launched in May 2022, the Warwick Africa Hub will be the focal point within the University for coordinating and monitoring the Warwick Africa Partnerships Strategy. The hub will engage with African universities to jointly address major global development challenges. Learn more at warwick.ac.uk/global/partnerships/africa/
Fellowship programme welcomes academics from Ukraine

An international research fellowship scheme run by the University of Warwick has filled its final positions, with six of the new researchers joining from universities in Ukraine.

The Fernandes Fellowship programme is supported by alumnus, Rui Fernandes (BSc Economics 1995-98), and is designed to develop lasting research collaborations between Warwick and Europe. The scheme has recruited 25 fellows in total since the programme commenced in 2018. Now, six fellows from Ukraine have joined the University and are collaborating in research areas across Law, Warwick Business School, Physics, WMG, Engineering, Warwick Medical School, History and Sociology.

The programme’s achievements to date include €20million in funding being secured by Warwick academic Dr Leandro Pecchia and Fernandes Fellow Dr Giuseppe Fico to help ensure healthier independent lives for Europe’s ageing populations. And a similar scheme has been established at the University of Paris, Seine.

Professor Seán Hand, Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Europe), said: “The need for bold and ambitious multidisciplinary research, and for international dialogue and partnerships seeking to support peaceful and healthy societies, are among the most significant leadership challenges of our time.”

“Warwick is proud that the Fernandes Fellowships programme plays a clear and decisive role in addressing these challenges; and it has done so much already to mobilise research and collaboration across the EUTOPIA European University alliance which Warwick helped to found. We work closely with the Council for At-Risk Academics, who are experts at supporting vulnerable researchers. It is thanks to donors like Rui Fernandes that we can continue international collaboration in this way and enable students and academics from areas of conflict to access hardship funds, scholarships and fellowships.”

The Fernandes Fellows from Ukraine will be at Warwick until the end of the year, with the option of Warwick continuing their funding for Ukrainian Fellows into 2023 if fellows wish to remain. The University of Warwick is a designated University of Sanctuary, which means it is committed to providing a welcoming and enabling environment to people fleeing violence, persecution and seeking sanctuary.

Donor, Rui Fernandes, said: “I’m delighted that the Fernandes Programme is supporting researchers from Europe to come to Warwick and be welcomed into an inclusive environment of learning, teaching and research. This is a crucial time to create educational and research opportunities that foster collaboration, open dialogue and partnership between countries.”

“As an alumnus, I’m also proud Warwick is a University of Sanctuary committed to helping people who are fleeing persecution and war. It’s incredibly important to me that the Fernandes programme has been able to support academics from Ukraine to come to Warwick.”

Since its inception, the Fernandes Programme has enabled a number of significant achievements including, notably, Warwick academic Dr Leandro Pecchia and Fernandes Fellow Dr Giuseppe Fico collaborating to secure €20million in funding to help ensure healthier independent lives for Europe’s ageing populations.

Professor Peter Scott, Director of the Institute of Advanced Study and Professor of Chemistry, said: “The Fernandes Fellowships programme is one of Warwick’s most successful fellowship schemes. The programme continues to attract some of the best and brightest academics and thinkers from Europe to Warwick to help forge long-lasting research collaborations across multiple institutions. It has been wonderful to see the fellowships helping to further the research and careers of the academics, helping them to thrive in an increasingly challenging landscape.”
Did you know?

Warwick is in the early stages of creating an Institute for Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution. Conflicts across the globe have brought into focus the need for more effective forms of promoting dialogue and building solutions that sustain peaceful societies.

The Institute will incorporate a leading-edge PhD programme. Students would be globally recruited with a view to them leading academic programmes and civil society organisations with new methodologies in conflict resolution. There will also be a new Masters programme in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution, and a Fellowship programme for civil society leaders based in conflict zones.

Join our Building Peace in Modern Conflicts webinar on October 3, 2022, from 3pm-4pm BST. Register your place at warwick.ac.uk/alumni/news-events/events/peace

Researcher profile: Maryna Utkina

Research interests: I’m Senior Lecturer in the Institute of Law at Sumy State University, Ukraine. My research interests focus on the issues of financial regulation and law enforcement around proceeds of organised crime including terrorism, money laundering and corruption.

Living through the conflict: Sumy is on the border with the Russian Federation. From the first days of the war, there was a concentration of various military equipment. Every day we had shelling from many types of equipment. Everything was closed and it was dangerous to go on the streets.

The main task was to stay alive and healthy and, if possible, help friends, relatives, and residents of the city. When there were alarms, we went down to the basement, played monopoly, read books, listened to music, played with the dog. We tried to relax. While it was quiet and calm, we cooked food and charged electronic equipment. My friends and parents are also in Sumy now. I have travelled to England to start working but call them very often.

Fellowship ambitions: It was a great honour for me to learn that I received a scholarship at one of the highest ranked universities in England. Knowing how the UK supports Ukraine, it was very exciting to find out that I have been awarded the Fellowship at Warwick. This is a huge opportunity for me as a researcher and scientist. It’s also very significant support in such a difficult time for my country.

World Conference on Undergraduate Research comes to Warwick

Students from all corners of the globe will be showcasing their work at the World Conference on Undergraduate Research to be hosted at the University of Warwick from 4-6 April, 2023. The event gives undergraduate students the opportunity to share experiences, engage in debates, and build international networks.

Philanthropic support funds the conference and provides bursaries for students who would otherwise be unable to participate in this unique opportunity. 2021 delegate, Alicia, commented: “Presenting to an international audience is a once in a lifetime experience.”

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