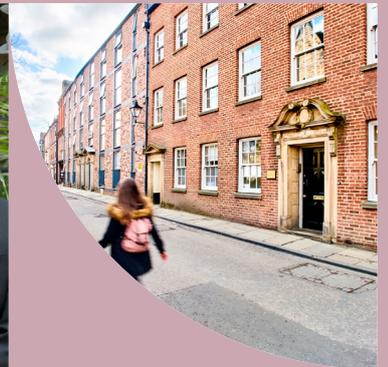


Donor impact report 2023/24



Thank you to the thousands of donors who gave in 2023/24

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*Professor Karen O'Brien,
Vice-Chancellor and Warden*

In celebration of your generous support

I am filled with immense gratitude for the generosity of our community of donors. Your support has been instrumental in advancing our mission to provide exceptional education, foster groundbreaking research, and cultivate a vibrant, inclusive community.

The 2023/24 year was another tremendous year for the University. We remain a world top 100 university in the QS World University Rankings and in the top 20 in the QS World University Rankings for Sustainability for 2024. Our student sports clubs have achieved an all-time record for the University by winning 13 BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport) national championships in the 2023/24 season. We have strengthened our connections to local institutions as part of the Universities for North East England partnership. From the local to the global, we are dedicated to excellence, and it is our community that makes these achievements possible.

This report highlights some of the ways in which our donors have supported the University in the 2023/24 academic year. These gifts have been greatly appreciated and have benefitted our entire community. From establishing scholarships to support students from lower-income backgrounds to enabling world leading research in hazard and risk, donor support has had a far-reaching and transformative impact.

In the face of the current financial issues that the Higher Education sector is facing, donations to the University have been more important than ever. Your generosity has enabled us to ensure that we can continue to provide an inspiring learning environment and produce world-leading research.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the University this past academic year.



The first donation helped us rebuild the foundation of the Club. The second donation will allow us to secure the future of our club for years to come.”

Isobel Hedley-Fenn

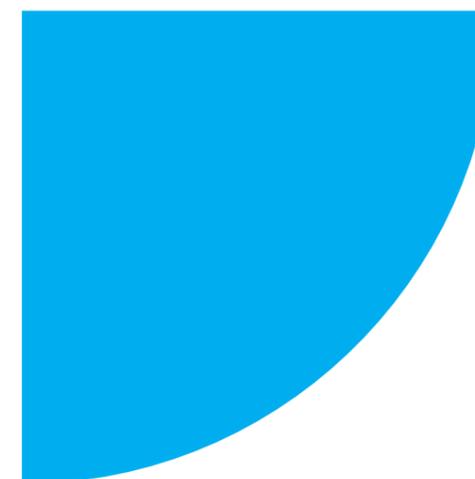
Legacy gifts for Durham University Sailing Club

Durham University Sailing Club (DUSC) is one of the leading university sailing clubs, competing in Team Racing, Yacht Racing and Match Racing in the annual championships of British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) and the British Universities Sailing Association (BUSA). Established in 1966, nearly six decades worth of Durham University students have sailed with DUSC. The Club is run by passionate students, who dedicate much of their time to maintaining and progressing the Club alongside their studies and other commitments.

Thanks to a generous legacy donation made by an alumnus and one of the earliest members of DUSC, the Club was able to purchase six five-year-old Rondar-made Fireflies. These second-hand boats replaced the 15-year-old boats with which DUSC had previously been training. Instead of spending time fixing cracks and plugging holes, the Club has been able to maximise time spent training to take performance to new levels. Having the new boats to train with has boosted the Club's morale and motivation to make it to early morning training sessions at Derwent Reservoir.

The Club has since received another legacy gift, which has raised ambitions even further. Current Commodore, Isobel Hedley-Fenn, feels honoured to be part of this passionate sporting community and is excited about what these generous donations will allow DUSC to achieve.

Durham University Sailing Club's new fleet of boats





Durham's copy of Shakespeare's First Folio in Palace Green Library before the theft.

Recovering Durham's First Folio

Generous donations have enabled our experts to establish a specialist conservation, exhibition and learning programme so that Durham University's copy of Shakespeare's First Folio can be displayed to the public and made accessible to researchers once again.

Shakespeare's First Folio has widely been recognised as one of the most important books in English literature. It is the first collected edition of 36 of Shakespeare's plays, published in 1623. Without the First Folio, plays that had not been published before, including *The Tempest* and *Macbeth*, may have been lost.

We believe that Bishop John Cosin acquired his First Folio in the 1620s and placed it in his library in Durham when it opened in 1669. Since 1937, the Folio and all of Cosin's Library has been part of Durham University Library at Palace Green where it has been an important resource for teaching, research and exhibition.

In December 1998, the First Folio, along with other rare books and manuscripts, was stolen from its display in Cosin's Library, and after 10 years without a lead, it was presumed lost. In 2008, a badly damaged copy of the Folio was brought to experts in Washington D.C., where it was identified as Durham's lost copy. Two years later, the Folio was returned to its rightful home in Palace Green Library.

Now, inspired by the 400th anniversary of its publication, Palace Green Library's book conservators are examining the Folio to realise the learning potential of Durham's First Folio and explore the book's unique history. The project hopes to conserve the Folio, conduct research to learn of its historical context and develop a range of public engagement activities.

Durham's First Folio poses a complex conservation challenge due to the damage caused after its theft. Donor funding has allowed the allocation of the necessary time for specialist book conservators to investigate the condition of the book and explore a range of possible interventions. An additional generous donation, which has funded a series of one-year internships for emerging conservators looking to specialise in the care of books, has provided this year's intern with the unique opportunity to support and learn from this significant project.

Support from donors has been instrumental in enhancing the exhibition of the Folio and programme of engagement activities. This will give the public the opportunity to learn and enjoy this unique and culturally significant piece of history. A gift from the Catherine Cookson Trust has allowed the creation of resources to engage visitors, including films and interactive digital elements. Several individual donors have made it possible to develop custom display solutions to allow safe exhibition of the fragile First Folio.

We are grateful to all of those whose generosity has enabled the conservation and exhibition of this iconic book.

Read more about the First Folio here: <https://cosinlibrary.webspace.durham.ac.uk/durham-first-folio/the-story-so-far/>



Celebrating scholar success



Most significantly, the financial support offered through this scholarship went into funding an internship at the Institute of Cancer Research in London during the summer of 2023. Being selected for this competitive summer vacation scheme was an incredible experience which opened up a wealth of opportunities to me.”

Elisabeth Moore

Over 50 scholarship-supported students graduated at Summer Congregation 2024 in our largest cohort of graduating scholarship recipients yet.

Scholarships provide talented students with financial support to enable them to make the most of their time at Durham. Our donor-funded scholarships typically support students from lower-income households. As well as helping the University to ensure that no student is held back by financial circumstances, they also provide students with a transformative opportunity to fully engage with everything that the University has to offer.

In 2024, some of the donors who fund scholarship programmes at Durham provided congratulatory messages for their graduating scholars to be shared with them on their special day. Many of

these donors are alumni themselves, so they were able to cast their minds back to their own congregation ceremonies and offer words of wisdom to the students for their post-graduation life.

Sharing our donors' messages with their scholarship recipients is an excellent way to introduce our new graduates to our alumni and supporter community. One donor wrote to their scholars: “Many congratulations on your graduation and this tremendous milestone. I very much hope that your precious time at Durham has inspired you to the great achievements which no doubt lie ahead. Ours is a legacy of learning, enquiry, industry and lifelong friendships.”

We look forward to seeing all that our scholarship recipients achieve after graduation.



Elisabeth Moore (Natural Sciences, St Mary's College, 2020-24), recipient of the Marsden Scholarship, at Summer Congregation 2024.



The Department of History.

Welcoming the Dr John Wreglesworth Scholars

In Autumn 2024, the Department of History welcomed three inaugural Dr John Wreglesworth Scholars to begin their studies at Durham. Established by John's wife, Liz Green, in his memory, the scholarship will enable students from low-income households in the North East to study History at Durham. The Department is fortunate to be able to recruit three Wreglesworth Scholars each year, building a community of scholars in History.

Born in Spennymoor, County Durham, in 1952, John was the son of a bricklayer and the oldest of four boys. He was an inquisitive student from a young age. A lifelong passion for history led him to study it at the University of Manchester and to take up a career in teaching. He became particularly interested in

helping adults return to education, developing a highly successful access course in History. While a teacher, John studied for his PhD at the University of Leeds, becoming an expert in medieval Asturias.

In establishing the scholarships in John's memory, it was important to recognise John's heritage, passion for history and commitment to broadening access to education. By enabling talented students from the North East to make the most of the opportunities available during their studies, the scholarships will enrich their recipient's educational experience while at Durham and beyond.

Isabelle Hutchins, a Dr John Wreglesworth Scholar, appreciates studying close to home but it was the

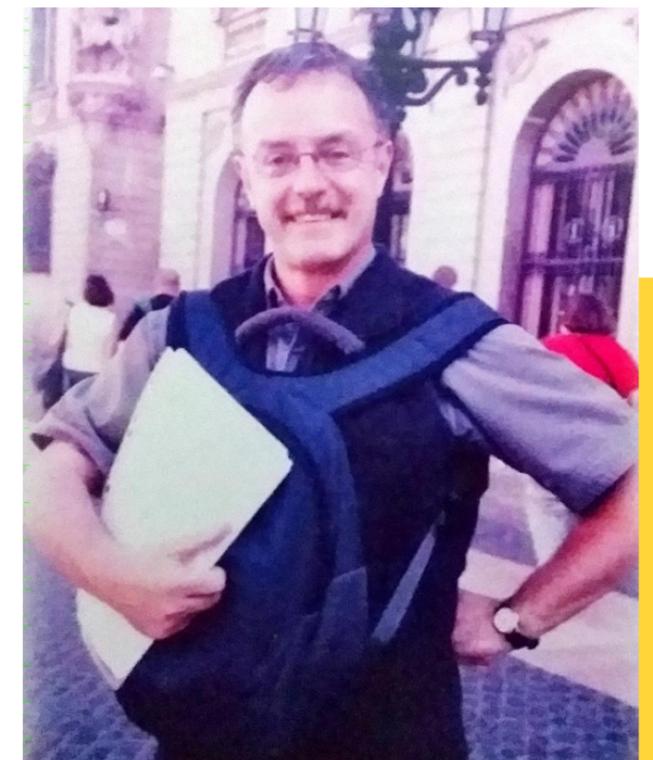
structure and content of the History course which influenced her decision to study at Durham. She believes the scholarship will greatly enhance her achievements during her time here. "I am extremely grateful to be the recipient of such a generous scholarship. As far as my university experience goes, this will make such a huge difference to what I am able to participate in and to the quality of my studies. I look forward to sharing my university journey with Liz over the coming years."

Dr John Wreglesworth



John was proud of his roots, his background and his heritage. He loved learning and was eager to share his knowledge and help others to expand their horizons. Helping others on their educational journey by establishing this scholarship is a fitting tribute to John."

Liz Green, wife of the late Dr John Wreglesworth



20 years of the Institute of Hazard, Risk and Resilience



Women surround a water point receiving water from a solar powdered desalination plant in Bangladesh, taken by Mohammad Rimon Hossain, field assistant of Afsana Esha, a Christopher Moyes Memorial Foundation PhD student in the IHRR and Department of Geography.

The Institute of Hazard Risk and Resilience (IHRR) is an internationally leading research institute at Durham University. Established in 2004 by academic staff in the Department of Geography, the institute's strength is its ability to approach complex problems holistically. In 2007, a building was erected to house IHRR's researchers, further establishing the institute as one enabling hazard, risk, and resilience research across 27 Durham University academic departments. With twenty years of field-defining research, the IHRR now comprises a growing community of researchers and practitioners, engaged in a wide range of projects across the globe.

The IHRR supports innovative research and training for use in policy and practice, collaborating directly with communities, NGOs, and governments, with many of its alumni working in the field of risk and resilience throughout the world. The institute is committed to working with, and learning from, the widest possible range of stakeholders living with hazard and risk—empowering people, fostering resilience, and improving lives.

Philanthropic support has been integral to IHRR's success, enabling PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, a named professorship, a landslide laboratory, and numerous visitors and outreach programmes. Between 2008 and 2023, donors funded 19 PhD students, many from the Global South, to conduct pioneering research on hazard and risk, helping to train the next generation of resilience leaders. Donor-backed research has also strengthened IHRR's ability to secure further funding, with the institute associated with over 100 grants and more than £27 million allocated to Durham University between 2007 and 2023. This support has allowed IHRR to lead innovative projects worldwide, from understanding climate impacts in river deltas to enhancing community resilience to natural hazards.

Over the past two decades, IHRR has tackled some of the world's most urgent hazard and risk challenges. In South Asia, its work has strengthened earthquake resilience planning in Nepal and advanced landslide risk assessment in India and Indonesia. In Africa, it has supported climate adaptation research in Ghana, Tanzania, and South Africa, helping communities respond to food and water insecurity. IHRR has worked with local organisations in Mexico, Brazil, and Indonesia to improve public health responses to volcanic ash and contributed to national flood mitigation strategies in Bangladesh. Across the UK, the institute has collaborated with government and industry to integrate risk modelling into urban planning and are currently assessing the impacts of extreme weather on renewable energy sources.

Understanding how hazards interact and trigger cascading risks is one of several core areas of the IHRR's research. In Turkey and Ecuador, the institute has examined earthquake-induced landslides and their long-term effects on communities. Research in Malaysia and Vietnam has informed strategies for mitigating landslides in rapidly urbanising regions, ensuring sustainable planning. IHRR expertise in multi-hazard risk extends to river deltas, where researchers in Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam have assessed flooding, sea-level rise, and environmental degradation. Recent studies in Nairobi, Istanbul, and Kathmandu highlight multi-hazard cascades in hyper-dense cities, providing critical evidence to strengthen adaptation policies.

Collaboration is fundamental to IHRR's success. By bringing together experts in physical and social sciences, engineering, and policy, the institute bridges research and practice. In Ukraine, researchers have supported crisis preparedness and post-disaster recovery, while in the Caribbean, IHRR has helped coastal communities design resilience

strategies for climate-driven hazards. Whether developing digital tools for risk forecasting, co-creating response frameworks with at-risk communities, or mentoring the next generation of resilience researchers, IHRR remains committed to globally relevant, locally impactful research.

Reflecting on this journey, Professor Bruce Malamud, Director & Wilson Chair of Hazard and Risk in the IHRR, emphasises the critical role of donor support: "Our work improves lives globally, from communities in South East Asia and Central America to Europe, Africa, and the North East of England. We are deeply grateful for the generosity of our donors, whose support has enabled us to push boundaries and make a tangible difference in improving lives."



It is an honour to have been involved in the IHRR over the 20 years since its launch, and to have witnessed the lives saved and improved by the work undertaken there. In our complex and ever-changing world, the IHRR's mission is more important than ever."

Charles Wilson, CBE (Geography, Grey College, 1983-86)

Visit this link to learn more about the IHRR: durham.ac.uk/ihrr



Workers clearing up after a landslide in Nepal, taken by Professor Nick Rosser, Department of Geography.

Supporting the next generation of social workers

In 2024, the Master of Social Work programme celebrated its 20th anniversary. The programme, situated in the Department of Sociology, supports the next generation of students who are passionate about making a difference through social work. Social workers provide crucial support to families, children and vulnerable adults. The programme provides students with the knowledge, skills and values to go out into the world and enact a positive change for those who need it most.

Our researchers and educators have curated a programme that emphasises the importance of safeguarding, community engagement, social work practice and social justice. The Master of Social Work qualifies students as professional social workers, setting the foundation for them to support local and global communities.

To celebrate 20 years of the MA in Social Work, our Durham Future Fund has established 19 scholarships across three cohorts for this programme. These scholarships seek to help students fund study and living costs to ensure that those passionate about social work are able to take up the opportunity to study with us. This has helped make up for the shortfall between course fees and the NHS bursary, which has been frozen for the past 10 years. Melanie Hindson, one of the 2023/24 scholarship recipients, shared what a difference the funding made for her: "I would not have been able to follow my dream of becoming a social worker and contribute to the professional field without the scholarship."

The Durham Future Fund is supported by our donor community. Gifts to this fund provide the University with the means to fund projects that may not otherwise be funded, respond quickly to new challenges, and direct donations to where they will have the most impact.

Read more about the Master of Social Work: durham.ac.uk/master-of-social-work

Post-graduate students at Durham.





During my time at Castle it was a special privilege to live in such a beautiful historic setting. It's now deeply gratifying to be able to support the improvement of this unique space."

James Riley, donor to the Fellows' Garden Arts, Culture and Heritage Project
(Geography, University College, 1979-82)

The Fellows' Garden Arts, Culture and Heritage Project

Work has recently started on the Fellows' Garden Arts, Culture and Heritage Project at Durham Castle. Situated between Durham Castle and Cosin's Library, the Fellows' Garden forms an integral part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Fellows' Garden Development, which has been generously funded by University College alumni, will provide a purpose-built, outdoor performance space to support student enrichment and expand community engagement.

The north end of the Garden is to include a terraced stage area with a portable canopy in case of inclement weather and power installation to enable lighting. Movable seating, with under terrace storage, will be provided on a central grassed area with further seating included in a terraced 'grand circle' at the southern end of the garden. The performance space will be able to seat audiences of up to 100. Upon completion the

Fellows' Garden will be much more accessible with lift access and an accessible toilet facility included as part of the development. Beautiful references to Durham Castle's rich history will be present throughout the Garden's design, in features such as stonework and planting.

Undertaking a development in a UNESCO World Heritage Site inevitably presents challenges, yet University College Principal, Professor Wendy Powers, believes the additional opportunities presented by the Project are worthwhile. She said: "The Fellows' Garden already provides a wonderful resource for our college community however the work which is now underway will increase its use in so many ways, not least in being able to welcome people from the wider community into the Garden. We are incredibly grateful to our alumni for their generosity and vision for this project."



Students working in the Mathematics and Computer Science Building.



I enjoy engaging with and supporting neurodivergent students and I am interested in developing ways to make a long-lasting difference to neurodivergent educational outcomes and experiences. I'm grateful to have the support of QRT in this important work.

Jess Hirst Disability Adviser/PDRA in Neurodivergent Student Support

Donor innovation in disability support

Thanks to the generosity of Qube Research & Technologies (QRT), we have welcomed our first donor-funded disability adviser to Durham. QRT is a global investment company focusing on research, technology and data to create a culture of innovation. They currently support two Durham Inspired Computer Science Scholars along with this pioneering new position.

Jess Hirst has recently been appointed to this role, attracted by the unique combination of research and student support. Jess will provide direct support to neurodivergent students across the University, while undertaking research as a Post Doctoral Research Associate (PDRA) to improve the educational experience of neurodivergent students in the Department of Computer Science. She reports directly to the Head of Disability Support while her research is supervised by academic colleagues in Computer Science.

Jess believes that this post is particularly timely as evidence emerges that there is greater interest in Computer Science for some groups of neurodivergent learners. Increasing understanding of the challenges neurodivergent students face, as well as how to break down barriers to enhance learning and wellbeing, is her motivation. She says: "I hope that by working with neurodivergent students in co-producing and shaping the project, my time in this post will contribute to both academic literature and educational practices in a way that is meaningful for neurodivergent students."



Truth is not dead – it is not. It is the death of where to find the truth.”

Christiane Amanpour CBE

Christiane Amanpour CBE, Chief International Anchor CNN, during a discussion panel at the 2024 Truth Tellers Summit.

The Sir Harry Evans Investigative Journalism Fund update

Sir Harry Evans set the gold standard for investigative journalism. From his fight in the Northern Echo to win a pardon for a young Welshman wrongfully convicted and executed, which spurred the end of the death penalty in the United Kingdom, to his celebrated 10-year campaign to win compensation for thalidomide children, Sir Harry remains an inspiration.

In celebration of Sir Harry’s values, we were proud to establish The Sir Harry Evans Memorial Fund, a landmark partnership between Sir Harry’s widow Tina Brown CBE and family, Reuters, and Durham University. In 2023/24, the Fund has supported the second Truth Tellers Summit, held in London on 15 May 2024, which has become a landmark event on the international

media calendar, and the appointment of the third Sir Harry Evans Global Fellow.

The aim of the annual Summit is to deepen the global networks that support fearless inquiry, celebrate the industry’s great practitioners and new trailblazers, and, above all, remind the world why serious journalism is indispensable. The Summit not only inspires and connects those who attend, it also promotes robust investigative journalism to a global audience through extensive media coverage and social media engagement. Media coverage of the Summit reached millions, and social media engagement significantly increased since the 2023 Summit.

Speakers included the BBC’s CEO of News and Current Affairs Deborah Turness, International Editor Jeremy Bowen, Radio Four Today programme presenter Mishal Husain, and Analysis Editor Ros Atkins; Reuters Editor-in-Chief Alessandra Galloni; Youmna El Sayed and Safwat Kahlout from Al Jazeera’s Gaza team; CNN’s Chief International Anchor Christiane Amanpour CBE; Editor-in-Chief of The Wall Street Journal Emma Tucker; legendary photographer Sir Don McCullin; and many others.

The Postcode Lottery Group donated £500,000 in support of the Summit. CEO of the Group Sigrid van Aken spoke on the need to sustain serious reporting saying, “The Postcode Lottery remains committed to being a force for good and stands firmly behind organisations dedicated to press freedom.”

Also speaking at the Summit was Rosa Furneaux, the 2024 Sir Harry Evans Global Fellow in Investigative Journalism. Reflecting on the influence of Sir Harry, Rosa said: “As Journalists, we going looking into the face of fear because it is our obligation. Harry reminds us most of this.” Rosa won the fellowship from a very competitive field, with a track record in the field of global health. Waylon Cunningham, the inaugural

fellow, won a Pulitzer Prize and a Polk Award for his work with Reuters while he was the Sir Harry Evans Global Fellow.

The 2025 Fellowship has recently been awarded to Pete McKenzie, chosen from more than 1,000 applicants. Pete, based in New Zealand, is a contributing writer to the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Guardian and The Economist 1843 Magazine. His investigative features focus on the politics of the Pacific, including exposing how corruption and mismanagement exhausted a major US fund in the Marshall Islands and how hundreds of Pacific veterans of America’s military are denied access to VA care.

Tina Brown said: “We had so many outstanding applicants this year. Pete is the reporter I know Harry would have chosen for his rigour and high-hearted passion for searching out stories of injustice against people who are too often invisible in our world.”

To find out more or watch the 2024 Summit follow this link: sirharrysummit.org

Celebrating the impact of our Chancellor's Circle

In May 2024, our Chancellor's Circle Annual Dinner was hosted by University Chancellor, Dr Fiona Hill, at the Barbican, London. The dinner sought to celebrate transformational and generous giving.

Dr Steve Chivasa, Dr Fiona Hill, Dr Ruaa Osman and Mark Brian at the Chancellor's Circle Annual Dinner 2024.



The Chancellor's Circle comprises the University's most senior benefactors, who have committed transformative philanthropic gifts to the University. Eight new members were inducted to the Chancellor's Circle at the dinner, joining this ever-growing group.

At the dinner, three speakers from across the University were invited to share the difference that the members' generosity has made.

Dr Ruaa Osman (MSc Global and Planetary Health, Hatfield College, 2023-24) shared how the Lioness Scholarship programme enabled her to delve into epidemiology and health policy at Durham University. Having previously worked as a doctor in Sudan, she shared that this scholarship 'emerged as a beacon of hope' when she and her grandmother had to flee the country. She hopes that her MSc will provide her with the invaluable knowledge that will enable her to return to Sudan to help rebuild the country's healthcare infrastructure.

Dr Steve Chivasa, Associate Professor in the Department of

Biosciences, spoke about how philanthropic support has enabled him to advance his research, which investigates how plants respond to stressful environments. Donor funding has been invested in a programme to improve agricultural sustainability and climate resilience through developing microbiome-based agri-tech innovations, which have already benefited farmers in Zimbabwe.

Mark Brian, former Head of Sport and Physical Activity, also spoke at the dinner and thanked our donors for their commitment to developing and expanding our facilities. Mark highlighted various examples of how donor support has enabled the advancement of sport at Durham, which includes funding the construction of a boathouse next to Maiden Castle and the purchasing of new equipment for the Boxing Club, including an Olympic-sized ring.

Thanks once again to our Chancellor's Circle members. Their generosity has had a far-reaching impact on the Durham University community and beyond.

With thanks

Durham University expresses its sincere appreciation to all of its friends, partners, benefactors and grant-makers for the support that has been provided during the past year.

If you are interested to learn more about any of the projects featured in this report, please find the contact details of our fundraising team below.

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