With warmest thanks to
The Clothworkers’ Company
for its exceptional generosity
The University of Leeds would not be the outstanding institution that it is today without the generosity and vision of our benefactors.

The Court of Benefactors recognises donors whose exceptional generosity gives them a special place in the University’s philanthropic history.

We would like to welcome you as a founding member of the Court of Benefactors and to thank you for your contribution to the University of Leeds.
The University traces its own history to 1831 when ten doctors and surgeons each gave £5 to establish Leeds Medical School. Almost 40 years later, representatives of Yorkshire’s leading trades and industry met to discuss the launch of a College of Science, and in 1872 appointed a committee to raise the £60,000 required for the buildings and equipment. Sir Andrew Fairbairn was the first to pledge his support with a gift of £1,000, and it is thanks to this initial gift that so many other local businessmen followed suit.

The formation of the Yorkshire College of Science also captured the interest of The Worshipful Company of Clothworkers which made one of the most notable gifts of the time. Its donation of £10,000 to fund a new building for a Department of Textile Industries was the first of many generous contributions to Leeds, and its exceptional support continues to play a key role in the University today.

The Yorkshire College of Science opened its doors to students in October 1874 in temporary premises and remained there until 1884 when it merged with the Leeds School of Medicine, paving the way for additional growth. The Yorkshire community again played a key role, helping to raise a further £60,000 for a new Medical School and a Great Hall.

In 1904 the Yorkshire College was awarded its Royal Charter and became the University of Leeds. Its subsequent development and expansion into a globally recognised institution with 33,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students owes much to continued acts of generosity.

“How much the University of Leeds owes the generosity of men and women from Yorkshire cannot be measured in money.”

E.J. Brown (1953), The Private Donor in the History of the University of Leeds
As the new University grew, its leaders again turned to the people of Yorkshire to help with a comprehensive building programme.

This new appeal was announced at a public meeting by HRH the Duke of York, later King George VI, in 1925. People from across the county were encouraged to support the University and invaluable publicity from the local press meant that this appeal raised more than any previous fundraising efforts.

Gifts of all sizes poured in from the Yorkshire community; one letter, received from a local citizen who gave two shillings and sixpence declared: “my imagination has been touched”. In all, £300,000 was contributed in just twelve months.

A growing university

“my imagination has been touched...”
During the 1925 appeal, Lord Edward Allen Brotherton agreed to support the University with a gift of £100,000. This outstanding commitment to Leeds would shape the University’s physical and intellectual landscape for future generations.

Born near Manchester in 1856, Edward Brotherton left school at 15 and began his career in manufacturing, launching his own company in 1881. Brotherton & Co became one of the largest chemical companies in the UK, allowing Edward Brotherton to dedicate himself to public service and philanthropy. Lord Mayor of Leeds in 1913 and MP for Wakefield from 1902 to 1910 and again from 1918 to 1922, he gave generously to many charities and made huge financial contributions to support the war effort. In 1929 he became Lord Brotherton of Wakefield.

Lord Brotherton made several gifts to the University in his lifetime, including endowing a Chair in Bacteriology in 1922. However it was his gift of £100,000 to fund the building of a new library that would see him recognised as one of the University’s greatest benefactors.

A short time after laying the foundation stone of the Library, Lord Brotherton pledged to bequeath his private Library to the University. When the bequest was realised it was accompanied by a legacy of a further £100,000 which, augmented by further donations from Lord Brotherton’s family, enabled the establishment of the Brotherton Collection’s endowment.

The magnificent Brotherton Library remains a focal point of the University, and is home to outstanding collections of rare manuscripts and literature. This, combined with the Brotherton endowment, represents one of the most significant contributions to Leeds.
The Lupton Family

Successful woollen cloth merchants and manufacturers, the Lupton family were great philanthropists and were heavily involved in the amalgamation of the Yorkshire College and the Leeds School of Medicine.

In 1851, Arthur Lupton’s daughters, Eliza and Elizabeth, also played their part in the development of the University with a donation for the purchase of an important piece of land that would enable the expansion of campus. Throughout the history of the University, no less than 14 individual members of the Lupton family have made gifts to Leeds and their generosity is commemorated by the halls of residence which carry their name.

The Burton Family

Born in August 1885, Moshe Osninsky left his home in Lithuanian Russia, aged 15 with just £100 worth of currency and the aim of starting a business in Britain. Arriving in Leeds in the early 1900s, the newly-renamed Montague Burton set up his own clothing business, which became one of Britain’s best-known retailers.

Famously known as a progressive industrialist, he made his first gift to the University of Leeds in 1929 to endow a Chair in Industrial Relations. Knighted in 1931, he was also recognised by the University with the award of an honorary Doctor of Letters in 1944. His impact on the University can still be seen today through the lectureships he established and the Montague Burton Halls of Residence which were named in his honour.

The family’s generosity, over several generations, has made a major impact on the University and on the cultural life of our city and country.
Sir Michael Sadler

Born in Yorkshire, Sir Michael Sadler became the second Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds in 1911. As Vice-Chancellor at a time of significant change he was instrumental in the development of the University campus and its curriculum.

Sir Michael Sadler also introduced an open day to the University's calendar to encourage the wider Yorkshire community to visit the Leeds campus. The event attracted almost 12,000 visitors and helped forge strong links between the University and the City. Beyond his role as Vice-Chancellor, Sadler was active in the arts community, bringing people together at the Leeds Arts Club, encouraging young artists and developing his personal collection.

As his term as Vice-Chancellor came to an end in 1923, Sadler donated many pieces from his exquisite collection, work which today still forms the core of the University's art collection.

William Riley-Smith

In 1934 Dr Riley-Smith of Tadcaster donated £25,000 to the University of Leeds to erect a new Students’ Union. The gift paved the way for additional support and the project got underway in 1937 replacing the converted townhouses and common rooms with purpose-built space for students to meet. The original building has seen significant expansion and is now one of the largest Students’ Unions in the UK.

This generous support grew from Dr Riley-Smith’s passion for student life and avid interest in amateur dramatics and the performing arts. Fittingly, the Riley-Smith Hall has continued to play host to theatre, dance and musical performances and regularly holds exhibitions and fairs of all descriptions.

Eric Gregory

Yorkshire businessman, Eric C Gregory, is an influential figure in the University of Leeds' history. He encouraged the University to take a proactive role in the promotion and support of the arts by offering to finance a scheme for the institution of fellowships in the creative arts. The effects of this imaginative act of patronage were far-reaching and long-lasting, with his legacy gift being the end point of a lifetime of support.

The Gregory Fellowships, an artist-in-residence scheme, ran from 1950 to 1980. Over the course of these years, various painters, sculptors, poets and musicians were linked to the University, selected by an Advisory Committee whose members included T.S. Eliot, Herbert Read, Henry Moore and Professor Bonamy Dobrée. The Fellows were required to live in Leeds during term-time, and to develop their work whilst contributing to the cultural life of the University.

The Fellowships were central to the cultural phenomenon that saw a flourishing of artistic activity in this northern industrial city, and made an impact on generations of important artists.

Eric Gregory was awarded an honorary degree from the University of Leeds in 1953. In his presentation speech, Bonamy Dobrée summed up the great contribution he made to the University: “By introducing into our midst people, for whom the practice of art is both life and livelihood, he not only offers the Fellows themselves a brief respite from commercial pressure... He makes the University a living centre of the arts, creative as well as critical... [He is] a man of rare imagination, idealistic, practical, seminal.”

When Eric Gregory died in 1959, the University was named as one of his beneficiaries and invited to add to its own collection by choosing art works from his personal collection. The selection that came to the University, which consisted of pieces by Matthew Smith, David Jones and Ceri Richards as well as Victor Pasmore, Ben Nicholson and Henry Moore, added new dimensions to our collections.

Eric Gregory’s legacy lives on, in the new Academy of Cultural Fellows. Inspired by the original Fellowships, the Academy has a vision to continue the tradition that Eric Gregory began sixty years ago.
Originally from Guiseley, Frank Parkinson studied at the University of Leeds from 1908. During his time at Leeds he was the recipient of a £30 Baines Scholarship and it was this philanthropic support that would make a lasting impression on the young engineer.

Some years later, in 1936, Parkinson made his first gift to Leeds. The £50,000 donation funded postgraduate scholarships for students from Yorkshire, offering other bright students the same support that had been extended to him during his studies.

As Frank Parkinson’s success continued, so did his support for the University. His desire to “leave an indelible impression on the mind of the student” which he hoped would be remembered “with affection” for years to come, led to another gift that would change the Leeds city skyline forever.

In 1938, Parkinson made a gift of £200,000 towards the construction of a new building. The monumental gift enabled work on the building to start immediately, but progress was delayed by the outbreak of the Second World War and the building was taken over by the Ministry of Food for use as a store room.

The Parkinson Building was officially opened in 1951 by HRH the Princess Royal. In 2001 the Frank Parkinson Yorkshire Trust continued the generosity of their founder, presenting the University with £100,000 to equip the building with new facilities.

Frank Parkinson’s life demonstrates the impact a scholarship can have and his immense generosity has provided a spectacular building, landmark and symbol for the University of Leeds.

“remembered with affection...”
Sir Henry Price

Knighted in 1937, Yorkshire tailor Sir Henry Price was famous for his “50 bob suit”, an affordable outfit for the working man. His gift of £50,000 in 1961 enabled the University to build new residences to accommodate up to 40 students.

Completed in 1964, the halls of residence were close to the University and represent one of the earliest examples of self-catering student flats. The Henry Price halls of residence remain a campus landmark and, after a recent redevelopment, now house up to 350 students.

The gritstone blocks that form the back wall of the halls also became famous as a – strictly unofficial – training ground for the University’s Climbing Club, inspiring talented climbers including Kenton Cool (Geology 1994), a celebrated mountaineer who has successfully summited Everest nine times.

Sir Robert Ogden

The son of a Bradford builder, Robert Ogden made his fortune as a self-made businessman. Knighted for his charitable work, including generous support for cancer care and education for children with autism, he is also feted as the country’s leading owner of national hunt racehorses.

Sir Robert has a long-standing commitment to the former mining communities of South Yorkshire and, through an innovative scholarship scheme established with the University in 1999, encouraged students from these former coal towns to progress to higher education.

Recognising the breadth of challenges they would face at university, Sir Robert also supported a mentoring and support system for sixth-form students, designed to familiarise them with the idea of university study and help them integrate more smoothly into campus life.

The financial assistance the scheme offered also acted as an incentive for the students to remain in sixth-form study and progress to the next stage of education. The success of the programme inspired the government’s Education Maintenance Allowance and Opportunity Bursaries scheme.

The Ogden Scholarships have provided genuinely life-changing opportunities for young people from some of Britain’s most disadvantaged communities. Through a number of gifts to Leeds, Sir Robert Ogden’s generosity enabled over 200 young men and women to realise their potential and attend university.

“My life will be the best it can be thanks to you, and I will be forever grateful.”

Sir Robert Ogden Scholar
The Ziff Family

One of Britain’s leading businessmen and philanthropists, Dr Arnold Ziff was also one of the University’s most devoted supporters.

An exceptionally generous benefactor to many causes across the city, Arnold was Chair of Council for many years. He led the way in the development of the University’s western campus and the creation of a new Business School on the old site of the Leeds Grammar School. The Arnold Ziff Research Chair in International Management recognises his commitment and support to the establishment of the Business School.

In partnership with Arnold, Marjorie Ziff’s great love of music would also see the couple actively involved in the Leeds International Piano Competition and their gift of a Steinway grand piano marked the completion of the Clothworkers’ Centenary Concert Hall refurbishment in 2004. After Arnold’s death, the Ziff family made an exceptional gift to Leeds to enable the construction of a new building at the gateway to the University. Home of the Student Services Centre, the iconic Marjorie and Arnold Ziff Building, which was officially opened on Marjorie’s birthday in May 2009, provides a permanent reminder of the generous support of the entire Ziff family.
Lord Laidlaw of Rothiemay

Irvine Laidlaw was born in Scotland in 1942. After graduating in Economics from Leeds in 1963 he went on to complete an MBA at Columbia University. He founded the Institute for International Research, growing it to become the world’s leading provider of conference organisation, training and knowledge and skills transfer, with over 3,000 staff in at least 40 countries.

Since selling the company in 2005 Lord Laidlaw has dedicated his time to philanthropic activities.

Lord Laidlaw’s commitment to education and to helping young people realise their potential – particularly those who have significant obstacles to overcome – is reflected in his support for the Lord Laidlaw Scholarships. Created in 2011, these entrance awards support disadvantaged students coming to Leeds through our acclaimed Access to Leeds programme, who also demonstrate great academic achievement and potential. This pioneering scheme ensures that a student’s background does not limit their future success – that exceptional young people are able to flourish in the stimulating academic and social environment at Leeds. The scholarships have already enabled more than 130 bright students to come to Leeds and will continue to open doors for over 100 students in the coming years.

Lord Laidlaw’s support for Undergraduate Research and Leadership Scholarships in the Faculty of Performance, Visual Arts and Communications opens up opportunity of another kind. These scholarships offer outstanding students the experience of working with leading academics on sustained research projects over the course of two summer internships. Students also benefit from leadership training and opportunities to give something back to the local community and their fellow scholars. This multi-faceted scholarship programme stretches and challenges our researchers and cultural leaders of the future and provides them with an unparalleled opportunity to participate in cutting-edge research.

Lord Laidlaw’s generous support for students at Leeds is helping to pave the way for a bright future for all those who have benefited from his generosity.

Peter and Susan Cheney

Graduating in Bacteriology and Biochemistry in 1969, Peter Cheney worked in the pharmaceutical industry for a short while before joining the UK pet-care business of Mars in 1972. By his retirement in 2004, Peter was one of two Co- Presidents of Mars, Inc., and the first non-family member to run the business.

Peter and his wife Susan have given generously to a number of projects across the University. A significant gift to fund scholarships benefited many students and helped ensure that applicants’ financial background did not become a barrier to their education. In addition, their gift to provide funding for a ‘financial literacy’ initiative, as part of the Reach for Excellence programme, has proved invaluable to the students who have received advice and guidance during their time at University.

The Cheneys have also funded Undergraduate Research and Leadership Scholarships which give students the opportunity to work with leading academics and participate in research. These scholarships have been awarded across a number of faculties – most recently in Biological Science and Arts – enhancing opportunities for talented undergraduate researchers right across campus.

Their most recent gift will endow in perpetuity the Cheney Fellowships. This campus-wide programme will attract individuals of exceptional talent and potential to Leeds for a period of intense and creative research and study, to inspire our students and build lasting partnerships with our staff. The recruitment of the inaugural Fellow is underway.
The Worshipful Company of Clothworkers is the University’s most longstanding benefactor; its generosity has shaped major developments at Leeds throughout the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

The City’s wealth was founded on cloth, and concern that Leeds should remain pre-eminent in the field was central to the establishment of related academic studies at the Yorkshire College of Science.

The Clothworkers gave £10,000 to build the College’s department for Textiles, Chemistry and Dyeing, and over subsequent years they provided generous grants for the maintenance and enhancement of these departments. Clothworkers’ Court, the red-brick courtyard in the heart of campus, and some of the magnificent buildings which surround it, date back to this early benefaction.

In the 20th century, as the University rapidly expanded, the Clothworkers donated a large sum for the first halls of residence, while further grants supported student education and maintenance, as well as research. These contributions not only supported the growth and development of one of the UK’s great universities, but also put Leeds at the forefront of global innovations in textile materials, colour chemistry and associated scientific advances.

This support has continued into the 21st century. From the magnificent gift to restore the Clothworkers’ Centenary Concert Hall for the University’s 100th anniversary, to the forward-thinking on-going support of the Clothworkers’ Innovation Fund to translate research into commercial applications, the Company remains a key partner in the University’s progress.

As Leeds embarks on its first major fundraising campaign of the 21st century, the Company has once again stepped to the fore. Its £1.75m grant to establish the Clothworkers’ Centre for Textile Materials Innovation for Healthcare will support the technological advances which continue to mark the University as a global leader – while tackling some of society’s most pressing medical needs. By funding a new Professor of Textile Technology, postgraduate researchers and cutting-edge equipment, this outstanding grant will help to create innovative products with the potential to benefit millions of people worldwide.

Clothworker plaques and coats of arms can be seen right across campus. They symbolise an important and enduring relationship which has enabled the University of Leeds to develop our campus; our research, our teaching – and, through them, our contribution to society.
“The enduring support of The Clothworkers’ Company has shaped the architecture of our historic campus, from Clothworkers’ Court to our Centenary Concert Hall, and the contributions you have made to advance research across Textiles and Colour Science are vital to the continuing developments in these areas.

Through your latest grant, you are shaping the University’s future by helping us to advance pioneering research in new medical textiles, creating products designed to improve the health of millions of people worldwide.

Your remarkable support over many generations gives you a unique place in the University’s history. Thank you.”

Professor Stephen Russell, Professor of Textile Materials & Technology
Throughout the University’s history, philanthropy has played a significant role in supporting our students, shaping our campus, and paving the way for exceptional research to be pioneered here at Leeds.

Through your outstanding generosity you have become a part of this remarkable history.