



ANNUAL REPORT **2023**

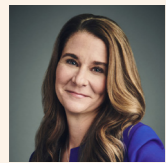
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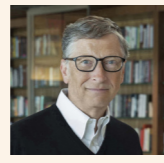


People

PATRONS



Melinda French Gates
Co-chair and Trustee of the
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation



Bill Gates
Co-chair and Trustee of the
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

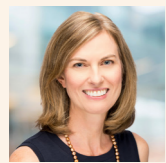
TRUSTEES



Professor Deborah Prentice
Vice-Chancellor of the University of
Cambridge (Chair)



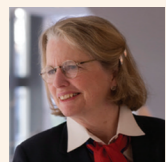
Timothy Harvey-Samuel
Bursar of Trinity Hall,
Cambridge (Honorary Treasurer)



Amy K Carter
Director, Community Engagement
& Family Interest Grants
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation



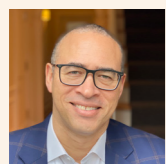
**Dame Sally Davies GCB, DBE,
FRS, FMedSci**
Master of Trinity College, Cambridge,
UK Special Envoy on Antimicrobial
Resistance and former Chief Medical
Officer for England



Dr Mimi Gates
Trustee Emerita. Former Director
of the Seattle Art Museum and
Yale University Art Gallery



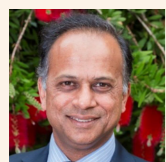
**Professor Usha Goswami CBE
FRS FBA**
Professor of Cognitive Developmental
Neuroscience at the University of
Cambridge and a Fellow of St John's
College, Cambridge. Founding Director
of the Centre for Neuroscience in
Education



Dr Jonathan Holloway
President of Rutgers University



Dr Julia Li
Co-Founder & CEO, Micrographia
Bio; Gates Cambridge Scholar
(2008 - 2013)

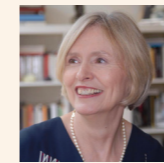


Professor Bhaskar Vira
Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education
at University of Cambridge; Fellow
at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge



Lord Simon Woolley Kt
Principal, Homerton College,
Cambridge and Crossbencher
in the House of Lords

STAFF



Professor Eilis Ferran FBA
Provost (Officer)
Professor of Company and Securities Law
at the University of Cambridge, and the
Tom Ivory Professorial Fellow of
St Catharine's College, Cambridge



Dr Jade Tran
Director of Finance (Officer)



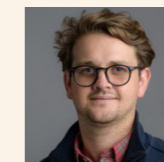
Dr Regina Sachers
Secretary to the Trustees (Officer)
The Secretary to Trustees is an
honorary, unremunerated position.
Dr Sachers is Director of Governance
and Compliance, at the University
of Cambridge.



Jim Smith
Programme Director
Senior Member of Wolfson College,
Cambridge and Trustee of Jimmy's
Cambridge



Luisa Clarke
Programme Manager



Jack Earl
Global Engagement Officer



Dr Carlos Podadera
Programme Officer



Arianna Koffler-Sluijter
Programme Assistant



Mandy Garner
Communications Officer



Usha Virdee
Accounts Officer



FROM THE CHAIR

Professor Deborah Prentice

The Gates Cambridge Scholarships are the product of an exceptional partnership between the University of Cambridge and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The programme has not only transformed the University, but also the lives of more than 2,000 scholars, who in turn have gone on to transform the lives of many more people across the world. This multiplier effect is the living embodiment of our vision to create a global network of leaders to improve the lives of others.

Since becoming Vice-Chancellor of the University in July 2023, I have seen my fellow Trustees bring their talents and expertise to bear in setting the vision and direction of the programme. I have witnessed our small but highly effective staff team deliver across all

operational areas. Most rewardingly, I have met with current scholars and have learned about the work and impact of our alumni. These experiences have been invigorating and energising.

It is clear from this report that the Gates Cambridge Scholarships had another very successful year in 2023. Looking forward, I am delighted that the Trust has realised the vision of Bill Gates Sr. to create a dedicated building for the scholars and staff – Bill Gates Sr. House will officially open at 17 Mill Lane on 3 May. I would like to thank all who have contributed to the success of the project, in particular Dr Jade Tran, who led the building project in addition to her role as the Trust’s Director of Finance.

The University is incredibly proud of the Gates Cambridge programme, and I warmly thank everyone involved to date for ensuring its success and positive impact in Cambridge and across the world.



FROM THE PROVOST

Professor Eilis Ferran FBA

The normal rhythm of the Gates Cambridge year means that I sit down to write this report soon after the interviews for the international cohort of new scholars.

The timing is brilliant because I always come away from spending several days in conversation with aspiring Gates Cambridge scholars with a spring in my step. Everyone we call for interview is academically outstanding and already holds an offer from Cambridge, which means we can focus on leadership and commitment to improving the lives of others. Those we select display these qualities in abundance.

This year, the members of our interview panels in Boston (US round) and Cambridge (international round) were all Cambridge professors or Gates Cambridge alumni Scholars (or both!). I am so grateful to all interviewers for their willingness to take a few days out of very busy professional lives to select the next generation of Scholars and I am delighted that we

managed to snatch a few moments from the interview schedules to take the group photos that you can see on these pages.

In partnership with Cambridge in America, we organised an evening reception and reception for Gates Cambridge alumni Scholars and other University of Cambridge alumni while we were in Boston for the US round interviews. Professor Caroline Bassett, who is Professor of Digital Humanities in the Faculty of English at Cambridge, Director of Cambridge Digital Humanities and Chair of the Gates Cambridge Arts selection panel, gave a brilliant talk on Automation Anxiety that prompted lively discussion.

The alumni Scholars’ weekend at Downing College in June 2023 was one of the highlights of my Gates year. The programme included a series of lightning talks by Scholars highlighting the positive impact of their work, a panel addressing problems created by financialised capitalism, and a fireside chat between Kofi Bookye and myself. Our chat ranged widely, including touching on the rising sense of excitement about the



Interviewers and staff at the US selection round in Boston, January 2024.

move to Bill Gates Sr. House, emerging plans for our 25th anniversary in 2025, and the evolution of the relationship between the Trust and the alumni Scholar community.

We reached a milestone in this relationship this year with the transition of the Gates Cambridge Alumni Association to the Gates Cambridge Scholar Alumni Advisory Committee. The handover was seamless, thanks in no small part to the excellent support and guidance that Jack Earl, our new Global Engagement Officer, and I received from Libby Blanchard, Darja Irdam and Luis Welbanks, the last members of the GCAA and the first members of the SAAC. It would be remiss of me not also to mention Halliki Voolma and Sanjana Metha who as the Co-Chairs of the GCAA before Libby and Darja, led the excellent groundwork that facilitated such a smooth transition.

Huge thanks are due to everyone involved in the launch of our 'So, now what?' podcast series. Featuring conversations between alumni Scholars, ably facilitated by broadcaster Catherine Galloway, the series is essential listening for anyone looking for practical ideas, vision and optimism about how we can tackle some of the world's most challenging problems. Three episodes were available by the time I wrote this report: How do we build back better after a crisis (featuring Kamiar Mohaddes, Todd N Tucker and Queen Chinyere Quinn); What is education for? (featuring Tara Westover, Aliya Khalid and Thabo Msibi) and What does extreme weather mean for us (featuring Ramit Debnath, Songqiao Yao and Victoria Hermann). And we have five more scintillating conversations to look forward to over the coming months. The incomparable production team comprised our own Mandy Garner



Interviewers and staff at the International selection round in Cambridge, March 2024.

and Jim Smith, together with Nick Saffell of the University communications office. The series is a pilot and we'd love to have your feedback on it and how it could develop. Please do contact Jack or myself if you have views that you would like to share.

My second experience of greeting new Scholars on their arrival in Cambridge, wishing them well before they set off on Orientation and welcoming them back again a few days later at their first formal Cambridge College dinner was as joyous as the first one. This year I was able to appreciate more fully the scale of preparatory work done by the Orientation Team of existing Scholars: it was truly impressive. Over the course of this year, I have also been fortunate to attend a number of the Scholar-organised Learning for Purpose sessions, including a very special session on how the Gates Foundation works, which was led by Estee Torok who is a senior programme officer at the Foundation and Honorary Senior Visiting Fellow, University of Cambridge.

We established two new channels for communication between the Trust and the Scholar-in-residence community - 'Tea with the Provost' and 'Ask Carlos' - alongside the regular formal meetings between the Scholars' Council and the Trust. Scholars continued to provide vital input into decisions about the interior design of Bill Gates Sr. House and the Council Officers were incredibly generous in making time for all of the briefings and trainings that are required as part of the process of moving into a new building.

The scholar-in-residence experience designed by Scholars for Scholars, as in the case of Orientation and of Learning for Purpose, is a cherished part of the Gates

Cambridge story. While keeping this ethos at the heart of everything we do, we are exploring ways for the Trust to take on more responsibility for the Scholar-in-residence experience and development programming, with a view to accelerating Scholars' growth as leaders and launching them into careers with a network of support. I hope to be able to say more about these plans later this year.

In November 2023, Professor Sir Stephen O'Rahilly and Professor Sadaf Farooqi, both world-leading academics in understanding the genetic aspects of obesity, delivered the Gates Cambridge Annual Lecture. In *Brain Food: How your subconscious brain controls your appetite, weight and growth*, Professors O'Rahilly and Farooqi gave a fascinating lecture explaining how the brain plays a crucial role in controlling our eating habits and body weight. With over one billion overweight or obese people worldwide, understanding the brain's role in this process is essential for finding effective solutions to tackle this global health issue.

The official opening of Bill Gates Sr. House will take place on 3 May 2024, which is after this report is finalized. So, it will not be until next year that I can make a full report on a landmark event that marks a new chapter for our community. However, it would take much more willpower than I possess to resist the opportunity here to say how thrilled are to be in Gates House and what a wonderful space it is. The Trust Office team moved in March 2024 and the Scholars will take possession of their Centre later in April.

I would like to thank artist Jill Dryer for the stunning painting that graces the staircase wall between the Trust Offices and the Scholars' Centre, and also the Gates Foundation for the generous grant to commission the work.

Gates Cambridge is a single scholarship that radiates out into the world to drive positive change. Our communications channels, including now the podcast series, continue to showcase the many different ways that Scholars make a difference in the world. Our plans to amplify this impact story message in 2025, our anniversary year, are starting to coalesce. These plans include the launch of an Impact Prize competition that will be open to all Scholars (both in-residence and alumni Scholars) and the offer of 25 additional Masters' places for the academic year 2025-26, which we

hope will expand the global reach of the Scholarship. The advisory group of alumni Scholars, across decades and geographies, that I convened to feed in ideas and to be a sounding board for suggestions is doing a magnificent job, and I would like to express my gratitude to all of them.

To think of Gates Cambridge without Jim Smith, who has been with us from the start, is hard. Later in this Report you will find a dedicated profile that covers some of the memorable moments of his career with the Trust. It is, of course, impossible to do full justice to his contribution but I hope that everyone who knows Jim will feel that the profile has successfully captured its flavour. On behalf of everyone, I would like to thank Jim and wish him all the best for the adventures ahead.

Gates Cambridge is a single scholarship that radiates out into the world to drive positive change. Our communications channels, including now the podcast series, continue to showcase the many different ways that Scholars make a difference in the world.

At the dinner for graduating scholars in May 2023 I was thrilled to be sitting opposite one of the Bill Gates Sr. Prize winners who was being recognised for her work in shaping and transforming University policy, practice, and attitudes to achieve equity, diversity, and inclusion in the University. As we chatted, it emerged that her first degree had been in law and amazingly, that she had been taught at the University of Zimbabwe by a professor who had been my very first PhD student. Small world! It was a truly wonderful moment for the two of us when we discovered that connection.

That serendipitous connection prompted me to think further about our community's power to bridge gaps and drive change. A second year of service as Provost has reinforced my conviction that Gates Cambridge is a community that thrives on onward-facing connections, dedicated to benefitting all.

Quick facts

Up to and including the class of 2023



279

Scholars studying in Cambridge



2,156

scholarships awarded to date



6,184

applications for 75 scholarships for 2023 entry

More than

1,700



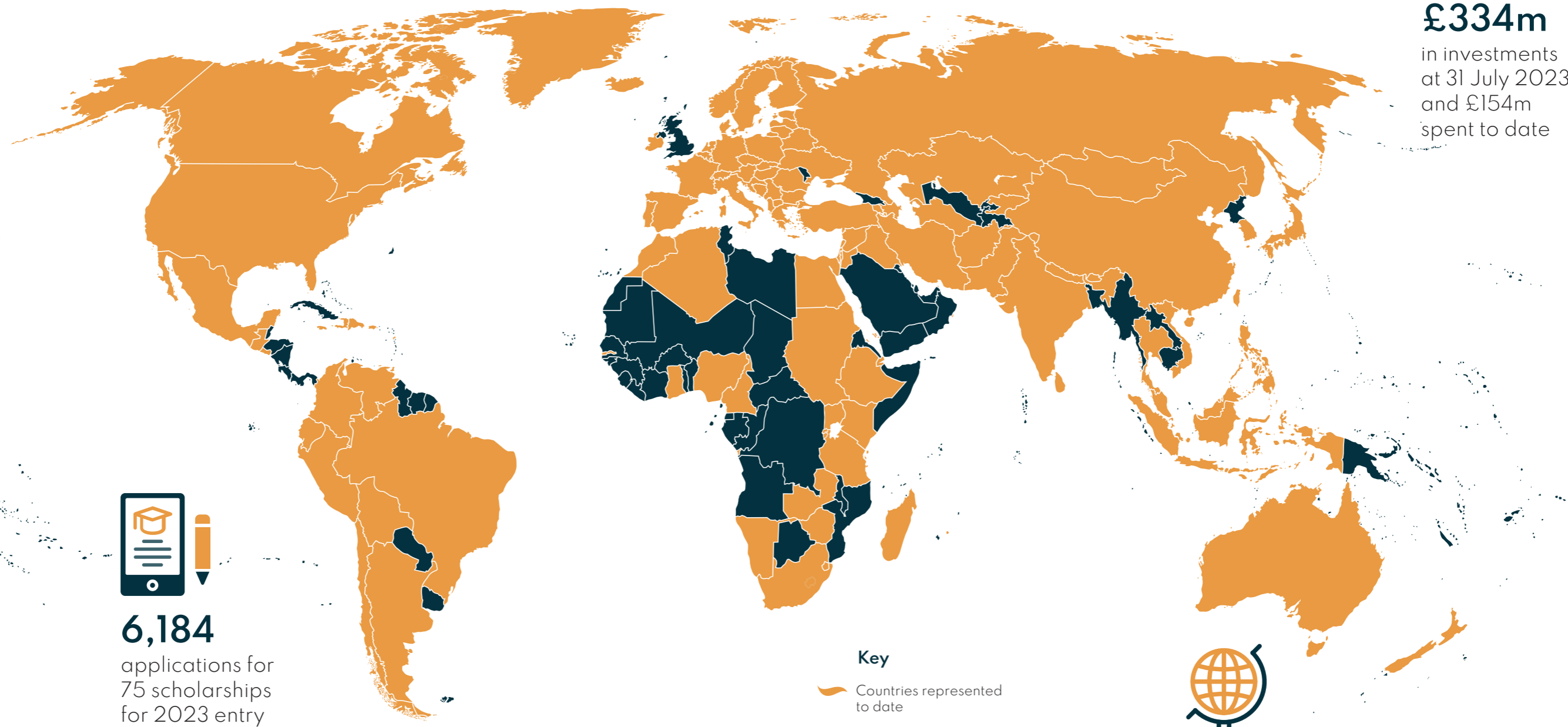
Scholar alumni spread across the world improving the lives of others



Approx.

£334m

in investments at 31 July 2023 and £154m spent to date



Key

 Countries represented to date

 Countries not yet represented

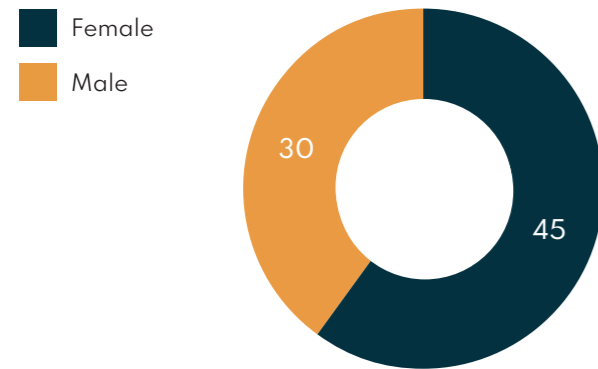


Scholars from **112** countries and counting

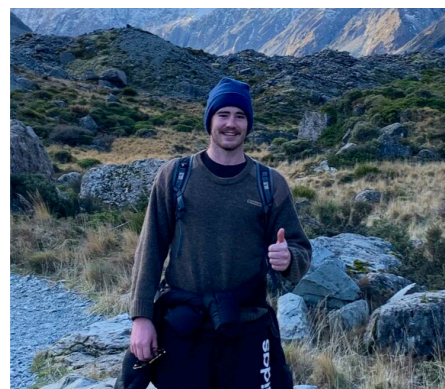
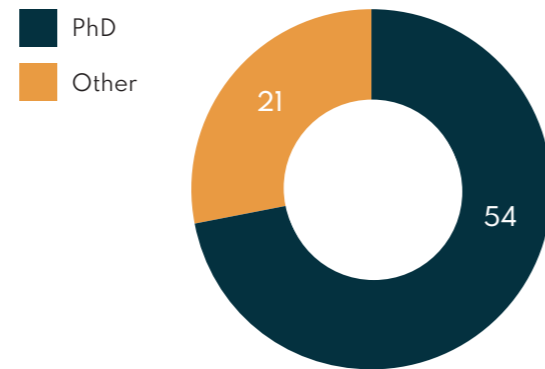
Summary of class of 2023

For 2023 entry, Gates Cambridge Scholarships were awarded to 75 outstanding candidates from 31 countries. They are members of 49 University departments and 25 Colleges

Scholarships awarded by gender



Scholarships awarded by degree type

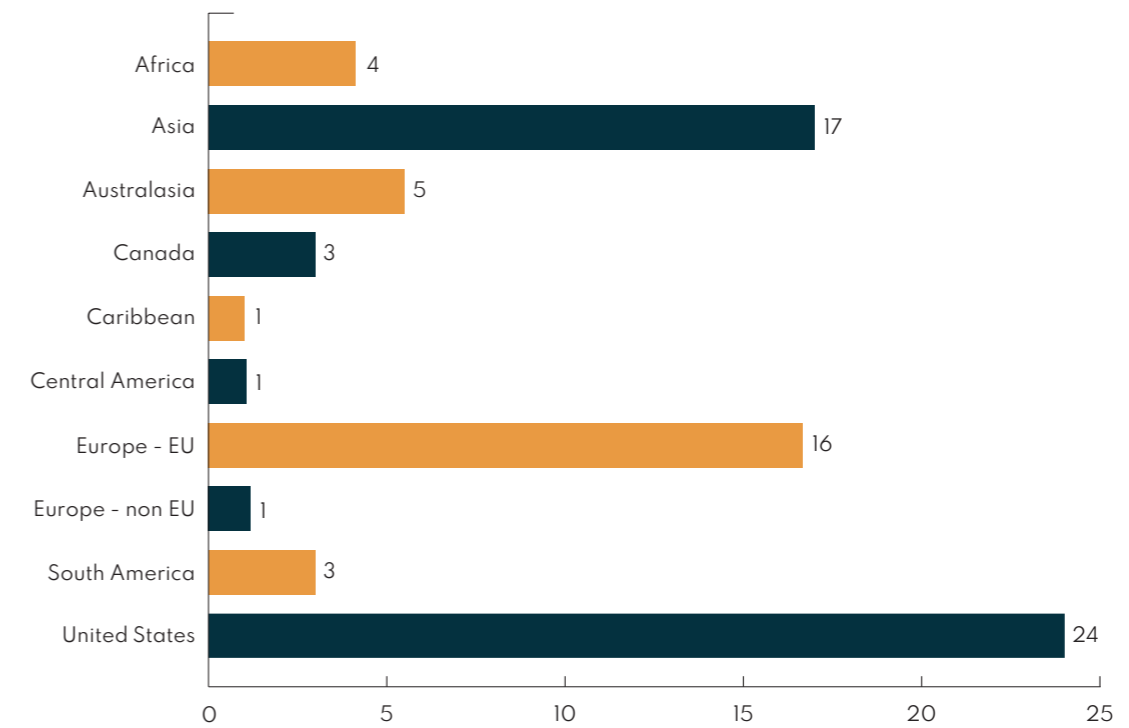


New scholar announcement and bios

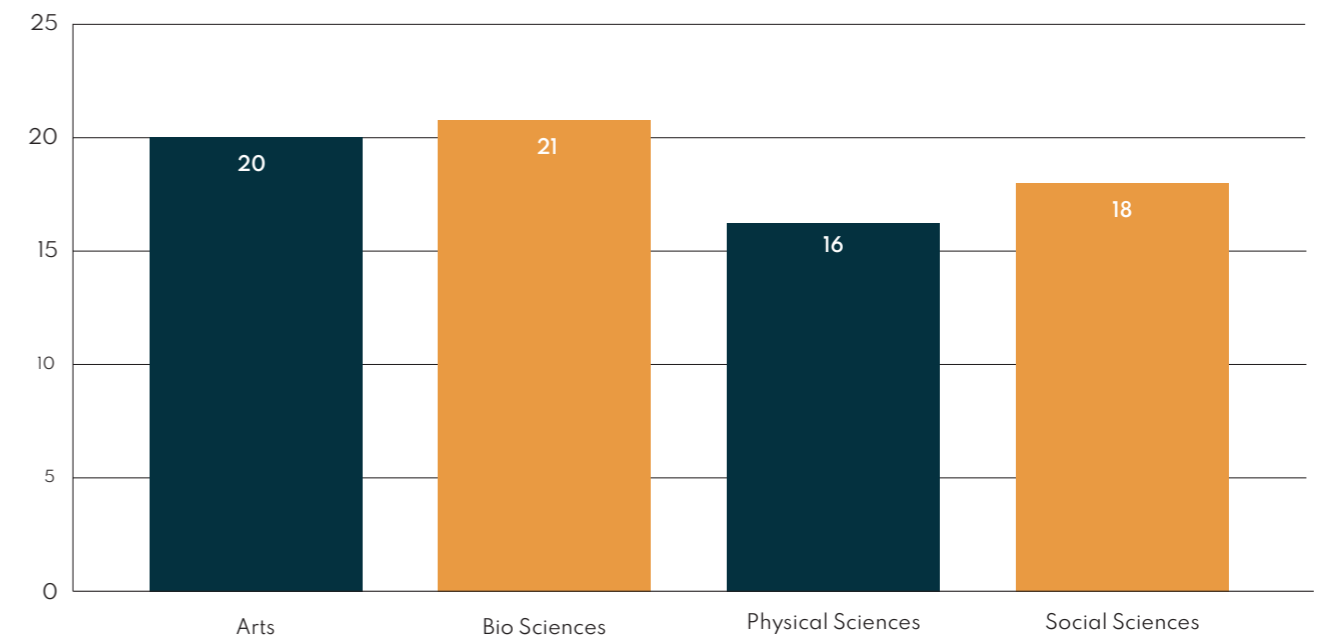
Read our announcement of the class of 2023 [here](#).

Read the bios of the class of 2023 [here](#).

Scholarships awarded by area of the world (primary nationality)



Scholarships awarded by selection panel





Global engagement update

Jack Earl

My tenure as Global Engagement Officer began in January 2024, and with the warmth and supportive nature of both colleagues and scholars, I immediately felt welcomed into this wonderful community.

I feel privileged to be contributing to the Trust's efforts in developing and supporting a truly global and engaged community that is having such a positive impact across the world, and I am genuinely excited about the years ahead.

The journey of a Gates Cambridge Scholar begins well before their arrival in Cambridge for Michaelmas and extends far beyond graduation. It is my aim to co-create – with input from colleagues and members of the community – an exciting and innovative engagement programme that cultivates a lifelong and tightly-knit community of leaders who possess a shared interest in improving the lives of others.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all former members of the Gates Cambridge Alumni Association for providing me with such great foundations on which to build on, as well as members of its successor body, the Scholar Alumni Advisory Committee (SAAC) for their wise counsel and support thus far. I outline below some of the key initiatives that I am currently taking forward; I am excited to work with colleagues and the wider Gates Cambridge community in designing and delivering this programming.

Welcome Parties

An important aspect of becoming a Gates Cambridge Scholar entails establishing a lifelong connection with a community of individuals dedicated to improving the lives of others. The first opportunity for this occurs at the annual welcome parties for new scholars. These will be held at various locations across the world between June and July 2024, during which scholars-elect will be invited to engage either in person or online with fellow members of the Gates Cambridge community. This interaction is to introduce scholars-elect to the

scholar alumni and provide them with insight into life in Cambridge as a Gates Cambridge Scholar. Over time, we hope this experience will be reciprocated as scholars-elect transition into scholar alumni, with hosting or participating in a welcome party becoming a standard practice within the community.

Alumni Weekend

The 2024 Alumni Weekend will take place on July 19th to July 21st 2024, and for the first time we will host the event at our new centre for staff and scholars – Bill Gates Sr. House. Planning for the weekend is well underway, and in an effort to foster deeper connections between in residence scholars and scholar alumni, this year will see a more integrated approach that reflects the lifelong affiliation to Gates Cambridge that I hope to strengthen during my tenure. Having felt the warmth of the community in Boston at the US round of interviews in January, I am thrilled to welcome all members of the Gates Cambridge community to what will be a weekend that celebrates and champions the dedication that Scholars demonstrate throughout their academic endeavours and careers.

Engagement Strategy

A pivotal aspect of fostering increased engagement within the community is gaining a clearer understanding of its needs. Following a number of discussions with the community, including members of the Provost's Advisory Group, the SAAC and individual scholars, it has become apparent that the Trust needs to be clearer about the opportunities and benefits of being a lifelong member of the Gates Cambridge community. To address this issue, we aim to provide clarity regarding the opportunities available to the community and making a strong case for the continued engagement of our members in a range of ways – from bringing more of the community together through our LinkedIn group, to hosting relevant and engaging events, to providing and promoting ways to give back to the programme, such as the Ambassador programme – see below.

Gates Cambridge Bookshelf

Following our relocation to Bill Gates Sr. House, we have set aside a dedicated bookshelf to showcase books authored by members of the Gates Cambridge community. This initiative garnered significant interest and positive feedback and will be ongoing, with an annual call for contributions. I have high hopes that this will become an important feature within the Scholars' Centre, acting as a motivator for current scholars and

an opportunity to showcase diversity in the impact that Gates Cambridge Scholars are having on improving the lives of others.

Ambassador Programme

The Ambassador Programme – which supports members of the community in giving presentations at their local universities or similar in order to attract more applicants – has been running for many years, and after a brief hiatus will be re-launched in 2024. This initiative aims to reach potential applicants who may not have otherwise considered applying for a Gates Cambridge scholarship. Furthermore, it provides an avenue for members to re-engage with the community. To facilitate this process and ensure the dissemination of accurate and up-to-date information, we are creating a comprehensive bank of resources that will be accessible to the community soon.

Online events

Given the scholarship's global reach, hosting in-person events accessible to the entire community presents challenges. Recognising this, I have started planning a programme of regular online events, such as a speaker series, panel discussions and live streams of in-person events, specifically tailored to engage those from or residing in underrepresented countries. This approach aims to maintain consistency in terms of content and quality while acknowledging the geographical spread of our community.

I am excited about our plans for the coming year and beyond and look forward to meeting many members of our amazing community.



The growing Gates Cambridge bookshelf, Bill Gates Sr. House.



Farewell, Jim: 25 years at Gates Cambridge

Mandy Garner

Jim Smith has been at Gates Cambridge since it was just a twinkle in the eye of its creators. He has seen the programme's birth, watched it through its teenage years and helped steer it into early adulthood and now, after nearly a quarter of a century, he is moving on.

Jim, the Trust's Programme Director, has been involved in international education since completing his undergraduate degree in politics in 1999. His first job after university was at what is now the Cambridge Trust, the largest funder of international students at the University of Cambridge. As conversations began

in 1999 about the \$210 million donation from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation which would lead to the establishment of Gates Cambridge, it was decided that the Cambridge Trust would initially manage the programme. Jim was asked to take on the job of administering the operational elements of the scholarship: "It was new, exciting and had a focus on improving the lives of others, which chimed with my own values, so I jumped at the chance" says Jim.

With a short time between the announcement and the first intake, Jim worked with Dr Gordon Johnson, the first Gates Cambridge Provost, and the team at the Cambridge Trust to put together a plan for attracting applicants and setting up interview panels. The structure of two rounds of interviews was set

from the start – one in Annapolis, MD and the other in Cambridge, UK or by telephone. Before the first cohort of scholars was chosen structures also had to be put into place to support them while at Cambridge.

Jim recalls that from the start there was significant scholar input into the programme. First came the Scholar's Council – set up by some of the first class of scholars to create a community in Cambridge. Shortly after that there was a plan for a scholar-led Alumni Association to engage alumni globally. Gordon and Jim encouraged this ground up approach. "It turns out that when you select scholars for their leadership qualities they have plans and get things done!" Jim says.

Jim sees the evolution of the programme in three stages: the start-up stage where it was all about learning on the go and delivering. "That was exciting," he states, "we were building the programme from ground up and every year we learned a bit more and refined things." Next came the 'teenage' years of building on the foundations and enhancing certain areas, such as branding and increased global awareness under the second Provost, Professor Robert Lethbridge. Under Professor Barry Everitt's provostship there was an emphasis on ensuring the scholarship was globally competitive, increasing the number of PhD scholars and planning for a Gates House. The current phase of early adulthood under Provost Professor Eilis Ferran has a focus on celebrating and promoting the impact of the community, enhancing professional development programming for scholars and increasing engagement with the scholar alumni community. Jim says "I've been very fortunate to work closely with all four Provosts and all Trustees and have learned a lot

from them". The staff team have also recently moved into Bill Gates Sr. House, the new building for staff and scholars. Jim says "it's wonderful to see this come to fruition – it is a stunning building for staff and scholars and a fitting tribute to our founder".

Global events have provided their own challenges along the way, including Covid. Jim talks about how the Trust and scholars had to pivot using online tools to keep the community connected. But despite the challenges, there have been so many highlights. They include successfully organising the early interviews in the US (where Jim was only slightly older than the candidates), getting to know Bill Gates Sr. and his wife Mimi Gates, engaging with scholars from across the world and being on the social sciences interview panel. "Interviewing the candidates was inspiring – they were always outstanding and full of positive energy and ready to change the world for the better" says Jim.

Working with "amazing" colleagues has also been a highlight and Jim plans to remain in touch. He has received a lot of messages since announcing his departure. Many say they can't imagine the Trust without him. His colleagues agree.

Jim says "Gates Cambridge has been a huge part of my life for a quarter of a century. It has given me incredible opportunities and I'm proud and privileged to have helped build a programme that has achieved so much. I am excited to remain part of this life-long community and to see how it evolves over the next 25 years. There will always be a big space in my heart for Gates Cambridge."



With Bill Gates Sr., Mimi Gates and scholars, 2013.



Meeting HRH The Queen at an event for Gates Cambridge Scholars, 2005.



A multi-disciplinary focus on food insecurity in Africa

Mandy Garner

Three Gates Cambridge Scholars are collaborating on an innovative project to map and address the disappearance of historically undervalued African indigenous and traditional food crops at a time of climate crisis.

The project is the brainchild of [Dr Carol Ibe](#), founder of the JR Biotek Foundation. Carol [2015] reached out to fellow Gates Cambridge Scholars [Albert Arhin](#) [2012] and [Chioma Ngonadi](#) [2015]. She was keen to tap into their expertise and in-depth understanding of the problems faced locally, including resource limitations, and because they can shape a vision that

works on the ground. She has been working with Albert over the past few months to make sure the project is relevant to the current situation for farmers on the ground in sub-Saharan Africa. Albert is a climate change and sustainability research fellow in Ghana where he also leads on a major climate adaptation project, working closely with rural farming communities. Chioma is an agricultural archaeologist from Nigeria and she will help to identify the crops that were grown historically and chart how and when any shifts occurred.

Also contributing as expert advisers are agricultural sociologist Juliet Kariuki and Francis Wamonje whose work focuses on using cutting-edge technologies to

We want to reach thousands of farmers to get their understanding of what is causing the decline in certain crops. Is it climate change or is it a shift in demand from western markets?

accelerate the detection of plant pathogens in insect and plant hosts. Francis and Carol both studied Plant Sciences at the University of Cambridge.

The project was inspired by concerns about the disappearance of certain indigenous and traditional African crops, from cereals to legumes to tree crops, and the shift for smallholder farmers to grow more conventional and agro-industrial crops, which are agri-input intensive and often less adaptable in certain parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

Climate change is one of the main threats to indigenous crops and cropping systems, but it is not immediately clear how smallholder farmers understand and deal with the challenges they face.

"Most of my relatives in Nigeria are smallholder farmers who solely rely on subsistence farming to earn a daily living," says Carol. "Whenever I talk with them, they share their concerns about the unpredictable weather patterns (among others) and how this is affecting their crop productivity, income generation potential and overall livelihoods. Unfortunately, it doesn't seem like there is help available to them because many of them live in far-to-reach rural communities. This is concerning, especially as the climate situation is set to worsen over the next few decades. Immediate and appropriate action is needed to address this problem, and the most effective and impactful solutions must integrate the farmers' voices and needs. That is why we developed the Agri-Innovation & Impact Project (AGRIIP)."

AGRIIP is a five-year strategic vision aimed at accelerating the development of demand-driven and locally adaptable innovative solutions for smallholder farmers who produce a significant proportion of Africa's food supply, but struggle to earn a decent living. The interdisciplinary and multidimensional project will bring together 100 Africa-based scientists, over 3,000 smallholder farmers and other key stakeholders over five years to champion innovations for improving the production, protection

(from extinction) and value addition of historically understudied and undervalued African indigenous and traditional crops in a sustainable, inclusive and eco-friendly manner.

"We can't afford to continue to lose these crops because it further exacerbates hunger, malnutrition and extreme poverty and rids people of decent livelihoods," says Carol. "We keep talking about food insecurity, but there is a huge disconnect between what we do and how we think about these problems from a Global North perspective and what small-scale farmers in Africa need.

"We need to go back to the drawing board and find out what the priorities are for these farmers so that we can create effective solutions that work for them."

The project builds on JR Biotek's 'Africa Bio-innovation Challenge' initiative, which supported a Benin Republic-based agribusiness start-up with seed funding in 2018.

By engaging thousands of smallholder farmers, it aims to identify top-priority climate challenges, with scientists leading the development and implementation of breakthrough solutions that work for farmers, businesses and consumers. The project will provide expert training in bio-entrepreneurship and commercialisation and a unique platform to support the translation of the most promising innovations to successful start-ups and enterprises, which will create employment opportunities, particularly for women and young people in rural farming communities.

Carol is also interested in the socio-cultural impact of the loss of culture and language associated with the disappearance of traditional crops. "We want to create a study that is holistic, relevant and practical to solving pressing local challenges," she says.

Carol says Gates Cambridge has been a really useful network for her work, stating: "It is such a resource for connecting people working in similar areas who have a shared vision and passion and an interest in work that crosses different lines."



Madeleine Hahne [2020] won a Social Impact Award from Cambridge's Vice-Chancellor for her work on climate change. The awards are presented every year to students who show exceptional achievement and commitment to positive social change. [Read more.](#)



Dr Bérénice Guyot-Réchar [2009] was awarded the prestigious Philip Leverhulme Prize to fund a book on India's participation in the world order from the late 18th century to today. [Read more.](#)

Reid Lidow [2014] - a former Executive Officer to the Mayor of Los Angeles - co-authored the book *Permacrisis: A plan to fix a fractured world* with former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Queens' College Cambridge President Mohamed El-Erian, economist, Nobel Laureate Michael Spence. [Read more.](#)



Freja Ekman [2018] was named one of the 2023 class of Hertz Fellows. Philip Welkhoff, who led the rigorous selection process and is also director of the malaria programme at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, said: "The innovation, creativity, deep and connected knowledge, grit and determination, and ambition to make an impact displayed by this cohort stand out and promise great things for the years to come." [Read more.](#)



Rumbidzai Dube [2019] and **Bailey Weatherbee** [2019] were joint winners of the Bill Gates Sr. Prize 2023. The Prize, established in honour of founding Trustee Bill Gates Sr., was awarded by Trustee emerita Dr Mimi Gates in recognition of their outstanding work and impact and the way they exemplify the Gates Cambridge values. [Read more.](#)



Ryan Kang [2022] captained the Trinity College team for the new series of the BBC's long-running quiz programme *University Challenge*. The episode aired on 17 July. Ryan said "It has been one of the most exciting and certainly unique experiences from my time at Cambridge." [Read more.](#)

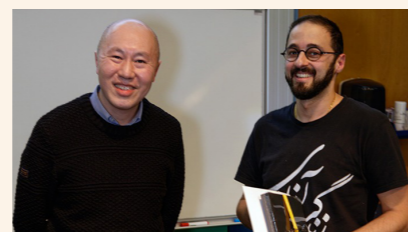


The Gates Cambridge Alumni Weekend in July - held jointly in Cambridge, UK and Washington D.C. - brought together alumni scholars and scholars in residence to connect and showcase their work and impact. The three-day event included lightning talks on subjects ranging from crop science to anti-microbial resistance and energy policy, alongside a fireside chat with Provost Professor Eilís Ferran, a cross-Atlantic panel event on the problems created by financialised capitalism for our health and democracies and a range of networking and social activities. [Read more.](#)



Mayumi Sato [2021] was named a National Geographic Explorer to make her research and activism on the environment and social justice more accessible. Mayumi says: "The aim is to ensure that my PhD project does not just stay in the academy, but is expanded to produce other forms of multimedia and knowledge products that communicate my research findings in diverse and accessible ways." [Read more.](#)

Kamiar Mohaddes [2005] – Associate Professor in Economics & Policy and a Fellow of King’s College – won the Sandra Dawson Research Impact Award for his work impacting climate change and net-zero policy. Kamiar’s work has been referenced extensively, including by the US Congressional Budget Office and 25 members of Congress in a letter to the Chair of the Federal Reserve Board. [Read more.](#)



Gates Cambridge launched its first official podcast in January 2024. *So, now what?* is for anyone looking for ideas, vision and optimism about how we can practically tackle some of the world’s most complex and challenging problems. Scholars from a range of different backgrounds and disciplines share the actions they are taking to change the world for the better. [Read more](#) and [listen here](#).



Professor Sir Stephen O’Rahilly and **Professor Sadaf Farooqi** – gave the 2023 Gates Cambridge Annual Lecture on 16th November. In the lecture, entitled *Brain Food: How your subconscious brain controls your appetite, weight and growth*, the speakers explained how the brain plays a crucial role in controlling our eating habits and body weight. [Watch the lecture.](#)



12 Gates Cambridge Scholars took part in this year’s Cambridge Festival, the University’s biggest public engagement project. [Read more.](#)



Emily Kassie [2016] won a coveted Sundance Film Festival Award for co-directing the film *Sugarcane* about abuse at a residential school for Indigenous young people in Canada. The jury praised its "sensitive cinematography, careful producing and editing that interweaves multiple narratives" and "its important voice for truth and healing". [Read more.](#)

“We are very excited to be bringing people a flavour of some of the stimulating, multidisciplinary conversations that Gates Cambridge has enabled and to celebrate the impact that our scholars are having when it comes to tackling some of the world’s toughest issues today.”



Jenna Armstrong [2020], who was part of the winning women’s crew in the 2022 Boat Race, was named President of the Cambridge University Boat Club women for the 2023/24 season. In March 2024 she led the winning crew in a dramatic win against Oxford. [Read more.](#)



Teaching AI to learn like a human

Richard Diehl Martinez

We have seen a recent explosion in generative AI, particularly ChatGPT, but, despite concerns about bias and other ethical issues, there has not been as much discussion of the model it is built on and what that could mean for the information we rely on in the future.

Simply put, generative AI draws on big data, the kind of big data that is usually concentrated in the hands of major companies. For [Richard Diehl Martinez \[2021\]](#), this presents a lot of concerns, for instance, when it comes to languages – a subject close to his heart given he grew up speaking three and being exposed to endangered languages in Guatemala.

English absolutely dominates the big data pile and minority or endangered languages where there is little

written data almost don't feature. That bias is also true for research. What's more Richard is interested in the way AI learns.

Richard says: "I am interested in how we take inspiration from how humans learn and code it into an AI model." He adds: "The aim is not to train AI to do well in one given task, but to train it instead to be a good learner so it can adapt its learning model to new tasks."

It's an ambitious task which draws not only on his own upbringing and interests, but on his multidisciplinary background.

Richard was born in Boston, but grew up between the US, Guatemala and Germany. His father is from Germany and his mother is from Guatemala. His interest in language was whetted from an early age by conversations with his grandfather about Mayan culture.

Initially, however, he was drawn to politics, and started a degree at Stanford in international relations. However, in his second year he was working as a research assistant in a laboratory where he was constructing financial models for East Asia. To do this he had to learn how to programme and how to analyse statistics and he found he really enjoyed it.

By his third year he had to pick a major and opted to do one in management sciences and engineering, a unique major at Stanford. He stayed on to do a master's to expand his knowledge of computer science and learn more about how computers work in order to integrate his interest in languages, politics and social science with computer science.

"The aim is not to train AI to do well in one given task, but to train it instead to be a good learner so it can adapt its learning model to new tasks."

Richard was aided in his explorations by his mentor Professor Dan Jurafsky, one of the leading thinkers in how Artificial Intelligence is applied to languages. Professor Jurafsky was interested in looking at bias and specifically in how to create AI that can counter bias. Richard worked on two projects with Professor

Jurafsky which looked at AI from a social and computational basis and published several academic papers, including [one on detecting bias](#). He finished his master's in 2020 and decided to get some industry experience.

He sought out companies that were interested in research on natural language processing. Most required their researchers to have a PhD, but the Alexa team at Amazon allowed Richard to do research that was allied to his master's work.

Richard had to pitch his research ideas to his team manager and the best ideas were developed further. One of his was given the green light and he started working on it with an engineering team. [It involved greater personalisation of Alexa](#) so the AI could respond based on particular knowledge of the customer, such as their work patterns or when they woke up.

By the end of 2021, Richard was keen to pivot away from natural language processing problems. AI was progressing rapidly with the foundations of ChatGPT being built based on big data and computational power. "I was feeling frustrated that the field was all about drawing on more data without thinking about how to improve the models from a mathematical sense," he says.

So he applied to do his PhD under Professor Paula Buttery whose research looks at modelling AI to how children learn language.

"My research looks at how we can make the language models AI draws on more human like so they can learn with less data and computational intensity," he states. His end goal is to be able to teach AI to learn languages where there is not a lot of textual or spoken data.

His PhD has been focused on three different perspectives – the model, the data that feeds it and the training paradigm through which the model learns and gets smarter.

For the first two years he focused on the learning paradigm and how to move from the big data model to [a smaller, smarter model based on meta learning](#). He hopes this will address some of the bias in AI. He says: "I want to think about the more fundamental properties of how to train AI in a more human-like way."



Conservation from the grassroots up

Rohini Chaturvedi

Rohini Chaturvedi's PhD explored how a complex, federated country like India negotiates environment and development choices in policymaking. The aim was to understand the key factors for promoting conservation. Her research involved a longitudinal study of how coalition politics and the federal government system impacts forestry policy, with a focus on the trade-offs between conservation and fast economic growth.

On finishing her PhD [Rohini](#) [2007], like many who graduated in the wake of the global economic crash, took a while to find work and found support in the Gates

Cambridge community. Eventually, she got a post-doctoral position at the Centre for Science and Policy to work on an Economic and Social Research Council project on understanding how to get evidence to translate into policy and practice.

Frustrated by the delay associated with getting her work published, particularly given its relevance and how it challenged the top-down model of making environmental policy at the time, she decided to organise her own research dissemination tour, with the World Resources Institute, a think tank which works on environmental policy, high on the list. So when she was in the US for a conference, she dropped by the WRI's office.

At the time it was setting up an office in India and its new CEO was visiting. He needed someone who could

She remains in touch with her Gates Cambridge network and says her time at Cambridge gave her the confidence to ask challenging questions and provided her with a rich community. "It's not just the PhD per se, but the village that comes with it," she says.

move quickly to set up their forest and land restoration programme. Rohini got the job.

It was a challenging role, particularly given the number of environmental programmes in India and the need to fit into the WRI's global mandate, but it gave Rohini the opportunity to meet with a wide range of people and to test new ideas and craft the WRI's strategy on forestry work in India. It also gave her experience negotiating all the politics associated with being part of a huge global organisation.

At the time, landscape restoration was just emerging as a term. People assumed that it meant taking over land and excluding local and indigenous people. Rohini had to convey that the WRI's approach was different, with bringing together different communities – the development community, the conservation community and the rights-based community – at its heart.

Through collaboration, consensus building and working with a large number of organisations, Rohini led the WRI India team in creating the first publicly accessible, interactive restoration opportunities atlas of its kind for India, just after the Paris Agreement on climate mitigation was made and to support India's implementation of its commitments to the Agreement.

The atlas was used to help work out, through more large-scale participatory work, a plan for action on the ground, beginning with a pilot area so WRI could understand land use changes and solutions to address land and forest degradation. One experiment, involved [WRI India conducting a Mapathon](#) in which representatives from the district, including those who had never used computers, were paired with young tech savvy people to analyse remote sensed images for understanding land use change.

Rohini led the WRI India team in the development of a platform that demonstrated how complex,

seemingly intractable conflicts of land ownership could be resolved using legal evidence. It pulled together maps, remote sensing images and gazette notifications.

The project spanned 2015–2018. Continued advocacy of the issue by political champions made it a priority for the Government of Madhya Pradesh in 2019 and it set up an inter-departmental taskforce to make recommendations on how to resolve disputes between forestry and revenue departments. After a state government change that work was put on hold.

At the end of 2018 Rohini stepped back from the WRI and is now the strategy lead for Forest, People, Climate, a global collaborative of philanthropic donors and civil society organisations seeking to halt and reverse tropical deforestation while delivering just, sustainable development.

In the last year nine interconnected strategic frameworks have been created, including three regional ones (Brazilian Amazon, Congo Basin and Indonesia), through a decentralised process that has involved at least 600 people and a process of approval by regional boards. "It represents a significant shift in how philanthropy does strategy, based on asking the question what will it take to halt and reverse forest loss by 2030," says Rohini, who also continues her work on India, although funding has been shrinking. "It's so amazing to see the level of collective energy out there," she says. "What is missing, though, is a sense of radical empathy. To make progress fast we need trust-based philanthropy, but that is in short supply."

She remains in touch with her Gates Cambridge network and says her time at Cambridge gave her the confidence to ask challenging questions and provided her with a rich community. "It's not just the PhD per se, but the village that comes with it," she says.



Financial Summary 2022/23

Jade Tran, Director of Finance

The Trust was founded with an endowment of \$210mn from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2000. Since that time the Trust has awarded 2,156 scholarships to Scholars from 112 counties, with the net value of the Trust as at 31 July 2023 standing at ~£334mn.

Maintenance and fees are the Trust's biggest expenses. In 2023, an increase of £0.4mn in student liability was accrued for scholar maintenance.

Support and Governance costs have increased very slightly compared to the previous year, in absolute terms to approximately 5.6% (2022: 5.4%) of total reported expenditure. All the staff were working partially remotely and the Trust's offices opened daily during the year.

During 2023, the Trust continued to fund a variety of activities to support the Gates Cambridge community, including the provision of a Scholars' Room and funding for the activities organised by the Scholars' Council. It also provided financial and other support to the Gates Cambridge Alumni Association (now Scholar Alumni Advisory Board).

At the December 2022 Board meeting, the Trustees agreed to increase maintenance for 2023-24 by

6.7% compared to 2022-23. The annual maintenance allowance for the Academic Year 2023-24 is £20,000 per scholar.

The Trust is entirely reliant on the income from and long-term growth of its investments and continues to use the Cambridge University Endowment Fund (CUEF) as its primary investment vehicle. The CUEF declares a quarterly dividend at the start of each year and these distributions result in predictable cash flows for the Trust.

In the year to 31 July 2023, investment income totalled £12.9mn, and the market value of the Trust's investments decreased by £5.7mn (-1.7%), with the CUEF performing reasonably against benchmarks.

In 2022, the University granted the Trust a licence to refurbish the first and second floor of part of 17 Mill Lane, Cambridge, to be used as the Trust offices and the Scholars Centre and known as Bill Gates Sr. House. At the time of writing (April 2024), the project has been successfully completed and the staff and scholars have moved into the new offices and Scholars' centre. The Trust has invested ~£7mn in the project, which includes the acquisition of a 125 year lease.

In order to maintain expenditure within agreed limits, the Trustees have decided to admit 75 scholars in 2024-25*.

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS Year ended 31 July 2023

Summary Statement of Financial Activity

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Income		
Income from Investments	12,867	11,339
Expenditure		
Charitable activities	11,868	11,622
Total expenditure	11,868	11,622
Net (expenditure)/income before gains and losses on investments	999	(283)
Net gains/(loss) on investments	(5,682)	6,147
Net income and net movement in funds	(4,683)	5,864
Reconciliation of funds		
Total fund brought forward	338,616	332,752
Total funds carried forward	333,933	338,616

Summary Balance Sheet

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Fixed assets (Including fixed asset investments)	335,869	341,001
Current assets	10,823	9,932
Liabilities (creditors falling due within one year)	(7,348)	(6,548)
Net current assets	3,475	3,384
Total assets less current liabilities	339,344	344,385
Creditors falling due after more than one year	(5,411)	(5,769)
Net assets	333,933	338,616
The funds of the Trust (unrestricted income funds)	333,933	338,616



T 44 (0) 1223 338467
E info@gatescambridge.org

Bill Gates Sr. House, 17 Mill Lane,
Cambridge, CB2 1RX,
United Kingdom
www.gatescambridge.org

