



LSE Volunteers

Celebrating volunteering and fundraising
at LSE in 2021

Volunteer Centre at LSE Careers ■



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Introduction

The LSE community has a long tradition of volunteering with almost 40 per cent of our students taking part during their studies. With their skills, dedication and hard work, they have a significant impact on the lives of many people, including their own. Student volunteers at LSE foster a sense of community on campus and make an important contribution to the work of charities all over the world.

We're delighted to share with you their inspiring stories and hope you enjoy reading about the impact of student volunteers from LSE. The students and charities featured represent a handful of the fantastic individuals, groups and charities we work with. Join us to help celebrate volunteering and fundraising at LSE.

David Coles
LSE Volunteer Centre
Manager



“Volunteering is an important part of participating in a community and being #partofLSE. Over this past year we have seen the importance of people investing time in causes they care about and the LSE community has been at the forefront of this. The impact of volunteering on students can be truly life-changing by improving their well-being, confidence and skills, all whilst improving the lives of others. Volunteering has also been shown to be a good way to take care of ourselves, physically, mentally and spiritually. I encourage you to volunteer and make your contribution to our community.”

Dame Minouche Shafik
LSE Director





A year in review

The LSE Volunteer Centre is at the forefront of LSE's engagement with the charity sector and is the hub of volunteering on campus. Each year we help students donate tens of thousands of hours to good causes locally, nationally and internationally. Our mission is to inspire and empower LSE students to volunteer for causes they're passionate about.

We're proud of the difference that volunteering makes to the communities we live, study and work in and how it can transform students' time at LSE. Over 70 per cent of students who volunteer say it improves their LSE experience and that it enhances their knowledge of their degree subject, improves their well-being and they feel more part of LSE.

COVID-19 has presented unprecedented challenges for all areas of society and particularly those that were already most vulnerable. Our charity partners have made incredible efforts to help their beneficiaries and we are proud of the response of the LSE community who put themselves forward for so many important causes.

With support from Student Futures we have been able to create new opportunities for LSE students to engage with civic issues. Our Community Engagement Programme has enabled seven teams of students to complete consultancy projects for seven of our

partners, exploring a wide range of challenges. We also launched a new seminar series, called "Take Action", where experts help our students explore some of the most pressing issues facing society today and how they can make a difference. Finally we have launched a disabled students placement scheme to give those students additional support.

Our charity partners continue to offer varied and interesting opportunities, giving our students the chance to take on responsibility to make a difference for a cause that they're passionate about. As always we have had fantastic feedback from the organisations we work with about their relationship with the Volunteer Centre and the quality of work completed by LSE students, something the School should be very proud of.

We are also particularly proud to partner with colleagues across the LSE such as the LSE Residence's Team, the LSE Faith Centre, Sustainability, LSESU and many more.

We are excited to build on this year's successes and to inspire even more students to become part of the LSE volunteering community.

David Coles
LSE Volunteer Centre Manager





What do you want to be when you grow up?



COACH BRIGHT

Divya Arjan

BSc in Accounting and Finance, 2021
Volunteer Mentor with Coachbright

Each time I was asked “What do you want to be when you grow up?”, my answer would undoubtedly change drastically. From fashion designer to dancer, the possibilities were endless. Somewhere along the way, the question changed to “What are your career aspirations?” – that’s when our childhoods ended. The future entailed setting appropriate goals with plans made to achieve them.

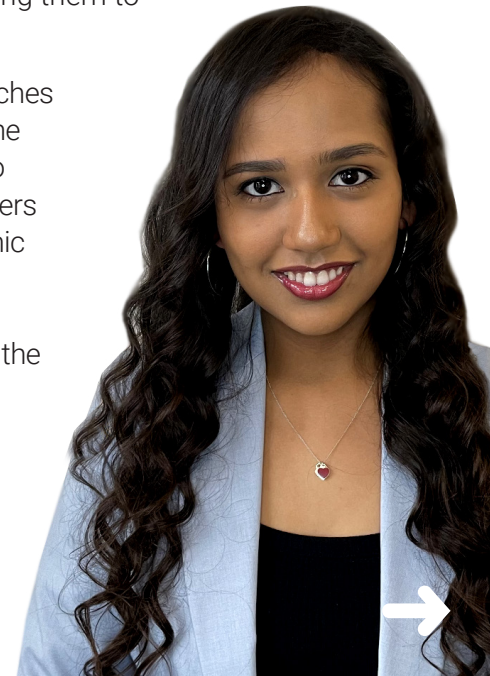
Many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds would have been forced to grow up a lot faster. Whether it is because they have caring responsibilities or work part-time to contribute to their household income, they tend to focus on enduring their present challenges rather than thinking about their future. Choosing from endless possibilities is a luxury that not everyone can afford.

The severity of the social mobility problem in the UK was brought to my attention when I started volunteering with CoachBright. One student shared how they felt that their teachers prioritised the learning of others, making no effort to provide any extra support. Due to the school closures in the last academic year and further disruptions arising from COVID-19, they have only fallen further behind.

Hearing their individual stories solidified my determination to help provide the confidence they lacked. It is incredibly rewarding to see your coachee

finally get through one of their long-term struggles. Their gratitude was overwhelming as, perhaps for the first time in their life, someone believed in them and was pushing them to do better.

At CoachBright the coaches provide students with the confidence they need to overcome societal barriers to achieve their academic and career goals. The organisation is also incredibly supportive of the personal development of its coaches. It has truly been a pleasure to work in a team of such dedicated and passionate individuals!





Giving back to the LSE community



Ibrahim Enes-Ozturk

LLB in Laws, 2022

Off-Campus Support Scheme Volunteer

I volunteer because I believe in giving back to the community. My aim is to help students who are currently walking the same path that I once did. Rather than let the students figure it all out completely for themselves, I wish to collaborate with initiatives that will assist those students. Volunteering also stands out to employers and in applications, as the volunteering community grows day-by-day. It is enjoyable and a way to self-develop.

Between 2019-2021, I decided to become a mentor for the 2019 Pathways to Law cohort at the LSE. I had a group of five students to e-mentor, assist with their UCAS applications, give advice with regards to their A-Level or BTEC exams/coursework and I uphold safeguarding initiatives during in-person events. I too was a Pathways to Law mentee, and I thoroughly owe it to the scheme for motivating me and helping me to pursue a career in law.

Additionally, I mentored students as part of the Off-Campus Support Scheme. I was a mentee of the Scheme in my first year, and felt better knowing that not all students live in halls near the campus. Since becoming a mentor for the Scheme, I have arranged Zoom meetings with my mentees and have emailed

them with advice and guidance on what to expect from university and studying law, how to approach lectures, classes and academic articles, and more.

I have enjoyed the responsibility of being a mentor for two different schemes and balancing them with my studies, because although my studies continue to challenge me, I have developed my communication, presentation, time management, and leadership skills. I look forward to volunteering in my final year and developing myself and helping other students to develop themselves in the process.





Volunteering through my society



enactus[™]

London School of Economics and
Political Science Student Union

Faye Mahon

BA in Social Anthropology, 2022

Co-head of a social project for Enactus LSE

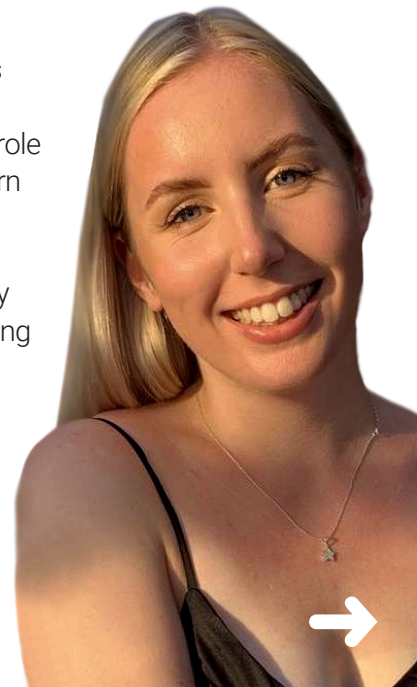
During my second year, I have been co-head of Creative Start which is a social project under Enactus LSE. Creative Start works with long-term unemployed women from London to equip them with transferable business skills. Throughout the Michaelmas term, we ran a teaching course and workshops on the basics of entrepreneurship.

Initially, the idea of presenting to a group of 24 people overwhelmed me. However, I found that the experience of teaching the classes really helped improve my confidence in public speaking and helped me learn how to engage a group. During the Lent term, we also provided a mentorship course for the women to work with a personal mentor and a business professional to develop a business plan.

Being part of this project has been an invaluable opportunity to learn a variety of skills including interviewing and recruiting student mentors, coordinating a team and above all developing my relationship management skills. In my course, we spend a lot of time debating societal issues and learn how to see the world from a micro perspective. The most rewarding part of this volunteering experience has been meeting the amazing women and learning how

to be sensitive to their needs, giving me insight on how to apply my anthropological skills outside of the lecture hall.

Volunteering through Enactus has completely enriched my experience as a student. The role challenged me not only to learn how to manage my time but also how to work with people who experience the world very differently than myself. Learning that I can make a change to people's lives has inspired me to keep working towards change not only through my studies and volunteering but also in my future career.





Esra Abd Elrahman

Community Development & Outreach
Coordinator at Age UK

Age UK Westminster is an independent charity part of the Age UK national movement. We support and promote the well-being of older people in Westminster by providing services and advice so that older people can live happier fulfilled lives. Some of our services include IT learning and support, Befriending, wellbeing activities, and Information and Advice.

Every year we host a Christmas meal at a local school for our older vulnerable clients, but last winter we had to do things differently! We usually host the meals to give our clients something to look forward to over this lonely and isolating period, especially for those not celebrating with loved ones. However, because of the lockdown, we had to cancel this meal. We knew what our clients had been enduring over this last year and we still wanted to do something special for them.

So we decided to deliver luxury Christmas hampers that contained some food, little presents, and a Christmas card written by primary school students, to put a smile on our client's faces. We were worried about volunteer numbers especially as the lockdown was closing in on us and we feared a lot of people would drop out. LSE students stepped in to save the project! Thanks to you, we managed to deliver all our hampers, and even had to turn away some students because we had completed our deliveries.

First of all, we were so grateful that so many LSE students applied to support our 2020 Christmas Project. The students who participated were incredible, helpful, and energetic, which is exactly what we hoped for from

volunteers. Over the three days, you and the rest of our volunteers delivered over 600 hampers! Some of you were even able to carry out multiple deliveries. We want to take this opportunity to say a massive thank you to all of you who participated in the event and the wonderful support you offered Age UK Westminster and our most vulnerable clients! As a charity, we would not be able to achieve most of our goals without the continuous dedication of our volunteers.





advocate



Lucy Talbot

Casework Administrator and
Volunteer Coordinator

Advocate is the Bar's national charity. We help to find pro bono legal assistance from volunteer barristers who sign up with us to offer their time and expertise. We exist to match members of the public who desperately need free legal help with our volunteer barristers who assist people with deserving cases who are unable to obtain legal aid and cannot afford to pay.

We have a small staff dealing with over 2,000 cases each year and rely a great deal on our Casework Volunteers who get real hands-on experience when they work with us. The LSE Volunteer Centre is essential in supporting organisations like ours to find law students who are passionate about pro bono and we are deeply grateful to the brilliant LSE students who give their time each year to help us promote access to justice.

At Advocate, we take on over 100 student volunteers over the course of three casework volunteering programmes each year. These volunteers are essential to the work we do. From drafting summaries using the case papers provided by our applicants; preparing court-standard bundles and calling chambers to help us place cases, our volunteers work closely with their casework supervisors from the initial request for assistance, right through to the point of allocating cases to a barrister. These volunteers in turn gain valuable

exposure to the practical working of the courts, a wide range of areas of law and, ultimately, the needs of litigants in person.

Thanks to the outstanding commitment of our volunteers, Advocate placed a record-breaking 1,412 pieces of pro bono work with barristers in 2020: an 86 per cent increase on the previous year. These cases included changing the law to benefit 2,000 houseboat dwellers; ensuring a university student didn't lose her funding due to a third party's fraud; fighting for the right of an Eritrean minor to remain in the UK and protecting a mother a child from separation by an abusive husband who launched international child abduction proceedings.

It is a privilege to work with the LSE Volunteer Centre and we were delighted to attend the 2020 LSE Volunteering Festival. We look forward to a continued partnership with both the Centre and its many dedicated, passionate and altruistic LSE students in the future.



What have you gained from volunteering this year?



Haritha Sriram

MSc Management, 2021

Volunteering has made me feel extremely content, created new experiences, expanded my network and most importantly, enabled me to make a difference.



Pravin Nikam

MSc Human Rights and Politics 2020-21

Volunteering allowed me to serve the community, which gave me a natural sense of life satisfaction. I also got the opportunity to share time with people from all walks of life and listen to their stories. During the COVID-19 outbreak, I delivered food to London's emergency food hubs by volunteering for The Felix Project. I was able to fight food waste and hunger in London, whilst making a difference to the local community.



Shahzeb Khan

BSc Actuarial Science, 2022

Volunteering has benefited me by allowing me to step out of my comfort zone and allow me to take part in things that I wouldn't dream of doing before. It has allowed me to learn new skills and meet new people, all the while letting me contribute to charities and initiatives I believe in.





Amna Bhatti

BA Geography 2023

Volunteering has benefitted me as it has allowed me to connect to so many people, expand my network and boost my confidence. It has always been a fun part of my life and has helped me see the impact of small actions.



Marianne Hii

BSc Politics, Philosophy and Economics, 2021

Volunteering has benefitted me by providing me a chance to contribute to a meaningful cause larger than myself and allowing me to feel like I am helping the community.



Ed Unwin

BSc International Relations 2022

Volunteering has helped me this year to find my career path! Volunteering as a Human Resources project officer for City Year UK allowed me to discover my interest in HR and use the experience to secure a summer internship. Thanks to volunteering, I can be a lot more certain of my future.





Ananya Jain

LLB Law 2022

Volunteering has helped me this year to make a tangible difference in my community during what has been a particularly devastating time for several vulnerable people. It has also been vital to my personal and career development goals.



Maria Hellel

BSc Accounting and Finance, 2022

Volunteering has helped me to meet amazing people, gain confidence and contribute to my community. It has been a great way to take a step back from my studies and reflect!



Dan Lawes

BSc in International Relations and History, 2022

Volunteering has played a tremendous role in my life as I have found that the satisfaction you get from devoting your time to a cause you are passionate about is next to none. I founded the national non-profit organisation, YouthPolitics UK, which works to empower thousands of young people through civic education and political engagement.





Lucy Elgood

Project Manager at Salusbury World
LSE Voluntary Organisation of the Year 2020

Salusbury World supports refugee and migrant families in North West London to rebuild their lives. We help people to develop the ability to navigate and succeed in London, and to plan for a fulfilling, enjoyable future. We nurture the whole family to ensure their well-being and build mutual trust.

Refugees are among the most vulnerable members of society and have complex needs arising from poverty, marginalisation, language and cultural barriers and inadequate social support. Covid-19 has only increased the challenges faced by the families we support.

LSE student volunteers have joined our Educational Mentoring project, helped with our Homework Club and After School Club and supported our Holiday Clubs. We were delighted to be named LSE Voluntary Organisation of the year, 2020!

The children who join our projects are adjusting to new homes, new schools, new friends and a new language. 95 per cent of them do not speak English at home. We want to help them to feel at home in London and to achieve their potential – in school subjects like Maths and English, but also as confident young people. We want them to make firm friendships and to enjoy life.





The support of a friendly and compassionate LSE student volunteer has made the world of difference to the confidence, self-esteem and wellbeing of so many children. Our projects can't happen without volunteers and LSE students are a crucial part of our team. LSE students are renowned amongst Salusbury World staff for their reliability – providing our young people with much-needed stability and reassurance.

Fatimah told us,

“ I started volunteering with the after-school club while studying for my Masters in Social Anthropology and Development to gain experience working with refugee and asylum seeker children...and then never left! The children are the best thing about volunteering and there's never a dull moment. It is especially amazing to see how your support as a volunteer makes a difference to them. Seeing those who have recently arrived in the UK, settle in a new environment, improve their language skills and communication and increase in confidence is such a privilege and you can't help but be in awe of them. Volunteering here is an incredibly fulfilling and humbling experience; you learn a lot about yourself and learn even more from the children. ”



“The support of a friendly and compassionate LSE student has made the world of difference to the confidence, self-esteem and wellbeing of so many children.”





Raising and Giving



Alice Rigo-Saitta

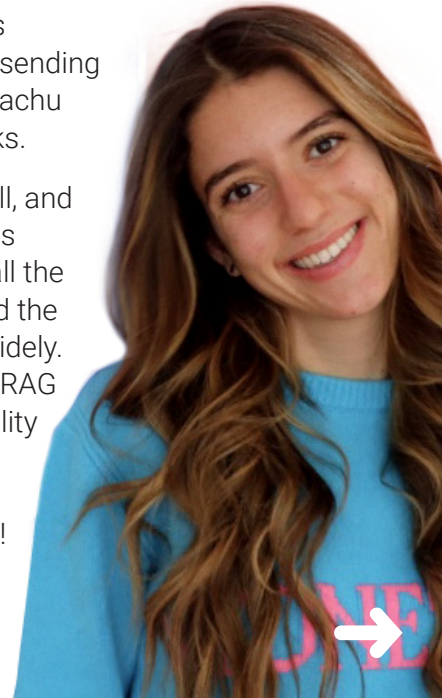
BSc in Sociology, 2022
LSESU RAG President

The year started with incredible difficulty. We were told, even before first term started, that there were countless restrictions, and we had to cancel the RAG band, which usually raises £15,000. We also weren't able to fundraise through cash donations, or in person events. But despite all these challenges, I am so proud to say that we delivered many events and initiatives! Our approach to fundraising online was to try anything and see how it goes. Where we fundraised a lot of money or not, we always poured our hearts into each initiative.

To list some of the highlights, we have hosted online panels, including the likes of Dame Jane Goodall DBE, a fundraising livestream with Pulse Radio, a fundraising sticker sale, a fundraising fifa quiz, "the Ultimate LSE Raffle", a quiz night at the three tuns, date night at the Three Tuns, "the Green Scheme" a week of Committee Volunteering, and mentee/mentor Socials. We've launched our first ever talk series "RAG Explains" during Green Week. We've worked with LSE staff in the LSE/St Mungo's homelessness partnership, Catering to fundraise at cafes on campus, and Res Life in a recent inter-halls running race. We delivered our first ever RAG Conference around our three themes of the year,

with 6 other societies. This summer, we are hopefully sending students to Kilimanjaro, Machu Picchu and the Three Peaks.

COVID-19 is affecting us all, and testing our strengths. It has certainly greatly affected all the charities we work with, and the fundraising sector more widely. Yet I am proud to say that RAG did not stop delivering quality events and initiatives, despite the initial hurdles that we found in our paths!





Raising and Giving



Johannes Riese

BSc in Politics and International
Relations, 2022

LSESU RAG Outreach Officer

Participating in RAG's external challenges really offers the best of two worlds. You get the opportunity to experience an adventure of a lifetime like climbing Kilimanjaro while also raising money for some fantastic charities.

It can be hard to always be excited about fundraising, which is why these challenges are so important. You get to do something exciting for yourself, but more importantly, you help improve the lives of people that most need it. Our two partners this year, Hope for Children and Marie Curie, do incredibly important work across the UK and internationally.

Hope for Children provides opportunities for the most overlooked and vulnerable children living in extreme poverty across five countries in Asia and Africa. Whilst, Marie Curie makes the darkest of times a little brighter for those suffering with terminal illnesses by providing support to patients and their families. Both charities have provided amazing, personalised support for all of our fundraisers throughout challenges. Knowing that the money raised through our external challenges is going to help these amazing causes gives you the motivation

and drive to reach the finish line every time. Every LSE student should definitely consider doing an external challenge next year!





Our Student-Elected Annual Charities



Kirsty Purnell

Community Fundraising Coordinator

We've had a brilliant experience of working with the LSE RAG team this year. They're a creative, positive and innovative group that have succeeded against the odds to raise an incredible sum of money for St Mungo's during the lockdown. They've also helped us raise awareness of issues relating to homelessness among LSE students, through RAG Conference and their brilliant RAG Explains series. A true pleasure to work with them.



WOMEN *for* **WOMEN**
International

Julia Vieyres

Fundraising Officer, UK

Working with LSE RAG this year is such a pleasure. Their enthusiasm and drive for what they do, commitment to Women for Women International's work and adaptability to the hurdles of COVID-19 are simply inspiring!





Isabella White

Community and Challenge
Events Fundraiser

It has been an absolute pleasure to have worked with LSE RAG as part of our two-year charity of the year partnership. Whether through their time volunteering with us or through funds raised, their support has been critical when our charity has had to scale up to meet the demand for its services during the coronavirus pandemic. To be so actively engaged in what we do at The Felix Project has made working with LSE RAG a delight and a partnership we would be sad to see end.





Committee quotes

“Joining RAG has been a highlight of my year! Nothing beats fundraising for amazing charities in creative ways - even Covid can't stop RAG from making a tangible difference everywhere! I've been inspired more times than I can count and have learned so much from being a part of the team. Every LSE student should definitely consider supporting RAG in any way!”

Michelle Soh

Campaigns Officer
BSc in International Relations, 2023

“My RAG experience has been fantastic. It's been a chance to work with a team of hard-working individuals that are as passionate about social and environmental change as I am. As RAG's Postgraduate Officer, I've been trying to engage postgraduate students and sharing our initiatives with them. It's rewarding to know that the LSE Community is keen to participate in social action projects and that, together, we're making significant contributions to our partner charities.”

Alexia Benchimol

Postgraduate Officer
Master of Laws, 2021

“This year was understandably quite limited in terms of the in-person events that we could pursue. Being a part of a society which still passionately pursued online events and initiatives helped to make me feel part of a community of motivated students and made such a difference in my year.”

Maeve Tebbutt

Events Officer
BSc in Philosophy, Politics and Economics, 2022





“Being a part of RAG has been an amazing experience, I got to fundraise for great charities and even volunteered alongside my committee duties, which is an opportunity unique to RAG! I've loved working with RAG and am looking forward to what the future has in store!”

Mary Samaha

Communications Officer
BSc in Management 2022

“Three years as RAG has taken me from the top of mountains to clubs around London all to raise for important causes around the world. Unforgettable experience.”

Rishi Chandarana

Treasurer
BSc in Mathematics with Economics, 2021

“I have really enjoyed working with the team to make the most of what has been a tough year. I have been really impressed by RAG's ability to adapt and innovate, and I am inspired to continue and build on our work next year!”

Uttarayan Dasgupta

Events Officer
BSc in Philosophy, Politics and Economics 2023

“Being part of RAG has been an amazing experience. I've really enjoyed meeting new people who are equally passionate about student fundraising and charities. My favourite part of RAG has been feeling like part of a student community and I would highly recommend anyone to take part who wants to make an impact on student life and the causes we fundraise for.”

Sean Chou

Head of Outreach
BA in Social Anthropology 2021





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volunteer@lse.ac.uk



LSE Volunteer Centre



The LSE Volunteer Centre is a centre of knowledge on the transformational impact that volunteering has for LSE students. We inspire and empower the LSE community to volunteer for causes they are passionate about and aim to create active citizens, shaping a better world through volunteering. ”

The LSE Volunteer Centre