



Volunteer
Centre



LSE Volunteers

Celebrating 20 years of the
LSE Volunteer Centre



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Noor Mansuri
BSc in Politics, 2024
LSESU RAG President

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The act of volunteering embodies many of our most cherished values. It is a way in which we give to others, but also a way in which we give back to, and, indeed, give meaning to, our communities. It is an act that nurtures our own mental health and well-being, and one that expresses to others what we value, both as individuals and as a community. In volunteering we step out of our routines and do for others for no other reason than wanting to do something good, a true expression of what it means to be altruistic.

I'm proud to be part of a community, like the LSE community, that takes volunteering so seriously and in which so many people step forward to do their part. I encourage everyone to make use of the support the LSE Volunteer Centre provides to engage in action they will find meaningful for themselves and for others."

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Larry Kramer".

Larry Kramer

LSE President and Vice Chancellor





20 years in review

As we reflect on the journey of the past 20 years, we are filled with immense pride when thinking about the lives changed by the LSE community through volunteering. Since the inception of the LSE Volunteer Centre, we have embraced the power of volunteerism to address pressing social issues and enhance the well-being of individuals and communities alike. We've seen tens of thousands of LSE students put themselves forward to make a difference over the past two decades, each of them embodying LSE's commitment to civic engagement.

Our success is not merely measured in numbers, but in the meaningful connections forged, the skills developed, and the lives changed. From mentoring school children to promoting sustainability initiatives, from welcoming refugees to standing up for human rights, every volunteer has contributed to building stronger communities across the world.

As we celebrate this milestone, we extend our gratitude to all who have contributed their time, energy, and passion to our work. Whether you have been a volunteer, supporter or a partner organisation, your dedication and commitment have been instrumental in our success. Together, we have made a difference.

Looking ahead we are filled with excitement for the opportunities that the next 20 years will bring as we continue to inspire and empower the LSE community to volunteer for causes which they are passionate about.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'David Coles', located below the main text.

David Coles
LSE Volunteer Centre Manager





Colleen Hamilton, 2008

Volunteering with Spitalfields City Farm gave me perspective that there was life (so much of it!) outside of academics. It broke me out of the rut of studying and transported me to a calm place where I could work with my hands, as my volunteering involved weeding, harvesting and washing vegetables in the community garden and doing food prep in the community kitchen. It made me feel like I was a part of the broader city of London. There were a number of older Bangladeshi women involved in the farm and kitchen, so it was an amazing opportunity learn about their culture and cooking, and to connect with people that I otherwise would never have met! I remember when my parents came to visit me from Canada, I was so proud to show them the farm.

Overall, volunteering is a wonderful opportunity to broaden your experience while studying at LSE. Living in London was a once in a lifetime opportunity, and it is too easy to spend the year with your head down in a book. Having a regular volunteering appointment forces you to look up and see this amazing city, meet people that aren't students, and engage a different part of your brain and self.

Colleen Hamilton

MSc Local Economic Development 2008

Spitalfields City Farm Volunteer



Having a regular volunteering appointment forces you to look up and see this amazing city, meet people that aren't students, and engage a different part of your brain and self. ”





Freya Thompson, 2023

A big highlight of my volunteering whilst at LSE was when I applied to the role of a Research and Policy intern at the WONDER Foundation. They are a UK-based charity with national and international programmes seeking to empower women and girls through education and mentoring. I worked on a number of projects, but my favourite was contributing to their work called The Fatima Project, which was all about supporting migrant women and their families to thrive in their new host countries and communities. This was such an unforgettable experience!

Volunteering helped me contribute to causes I already cared about but in a meaningful way. Specifically, I felt like my work really organised around refugee and migrant rights, as well as female empowerment. This inspired me to pursue my MSc in Development Studies, as I loved the exposure to working on international programmes that contributed to economic development, women's empowerment and poverty reduction. Volunteering also made me realise how valuable volunteers are to charities in the UK, and how they can contribute significantly to their work by committing some time each week.

Volunteering really is worth it, especially if you're keen to pursue a career in the charity and voluntary sector, international organisations or public affairs. It's such a great way to gain skills and training, as well as an insight into a career and sector without any solid commitment. It also allows you to meet some brilliant people, either those that you work with, other volunteers or those who you are supporting.

Freya Thompson

MSc Development Studies 2023, BSc Politics and History 2022
Student Academic Mentor, WONDER Foundation intern,
Student Volunteering Ambassador



Volunteering helped me contribute to causes I already cared about but in a meaningful way. ”





The feeling of fighting for a cause you are passionate about is second to none, but the skills that you gain from it are unparalleled. ”

Dan Lawes

BSc in International Relations
and History, 2022





Volunteering was one of the highlights of my LSE experience, not only did it teach me values and skills that I'll take forward with me long after I graduate, but it also allowed me to connect with students who have the same passions that I do. ”

Abigail Williams

BSC in Politics and History, 2022





Seeing how much LSE values volunteering and the support, guidance and encouragement offered through the LSE Volunteer Centre was what pushed me to find the best ways to volunteer for me. ”

Tanya Marwaha
International Relations with
Mandarin, 2022





Volunteering has not only been an opportunity to help me upskill and learn new things, but it has also been a constant in my life that has helped build my personal resilience. ”

Helen Bourne

BSc in International Social and Public Policy, 2025





Nava Gottlieb, 2023

My interest in studying Social Policy stemmed from a desire to bring about meaningful change to improve people's welfare; by working at non-profit organisations in parallel with my studies at the LSE, including at The Felix Project, I gained firsthand experience on how I could go about doing so.

Volunteering helped me raise student awareness and engagement about the causes I am passionate about: addressing food insecurity and food waste. The LSESU FoodCycle Society enabled me to contribute 'in the real world' to the societal challenges I was learning about through my studies. One of my best memories was co-organising a panel talk with the LSESU Circular Economy Society and FoodWave London: the opportunity to foster a space for discussion for students, for sharing thoughts and ideas about the intersections between problems in the agricultural system and climate change was highly enriching to my LSE experience. I also really enjoyed organising a volunteering session for students to help them make an impact by supporting a FoodCycle branch (they had a great time making fantastic meals!).

I cannot underscore enough the inherent value of volunteering, of contributing to the 'wider world' around us, of helping out people who we might just walk pass during our daily commute. There's so much out there and you can definitely find a 'niche' which suits your interest and you will meet lovely, thoughtful people along the way who want to make the world a better place.

Nava Gottlieb

BSc International Social and Public Policy 2023
President of LSESU FoodCycle society and volunteer
with The Felix Project



The opportunity to foster a space for discussion for students, for sharing thoughts and ideas about the intersections between problems in the agricultural system and climate change was highly enriching to my LSE experience. ”





Érika Huartos-Castañeda, 2024

When I arrived at LSE, I was determined to dive into a meaningful social project that would allow me to contribute to society, strengthen my English communication skills and learning more about project management. That is when I discovered Marie Curie and the Student Champion position.

I did not hesitate to apply because Marie Curie's mission is to ensure everyone receives compassionate end-of-life care. Having been my mother's caregiver during her final battle with cancer, I understood firsthand the challenges and the crucial need for support. Joining Marie Curie was not just about meeting my professional and personal goals; it was about continuing to make my mother proud by teaming up with a crew that helps families navigate the toughest of times, just like ours. It is my way of honouring their memory.

Our first meeting was at their offices, and the team warmly welcomed and supported me. Their encouragement over time has emboldened me to go above and beyond my role as a Student Champion. I am involved in other charity campaigns, like December's fundraising drive with collection buckets, and I have mingled with fellow volunteers at networking events, forging connections and building a community.

Along the way, fulfilling my role has pushed me to interact with diverse people, fueling my drive to improve my English communication skills, which was one of my goals. Ultimately, collaborating with Marie Curie is a privilege because they wholeheartedly live out their mission to champion human dignity in every facet of their work.

Érika Huartos-Castañeda

MSc Social and Cultural Psychology 2024

Marie Curie Student Champion



Joining Marie Curie was not just about meeting my professional and personal goals; it was about continuing to make my mother proud by teaming up with a crew that helps families navigate the toughest of times, just like ours. ”





The student volunteers I have worked with through Students Talk About Loss never fail to amaze me for their selflessness and sensitivity. Their work has helped countless people going through some of the most difficult times in their lives. ”

Students Talk About Loss



LSE students have injected energy and expertise into Wonder Foundation. We have learnt from them as much as they have learnt from us and they have enabled us to support many more women and engage many more people. ”

Wonder Foundation



We have been delighted to host LSE students at Refuge. The commitment and enthusiasm they have brought to team has been impressive and we have all experienced the positive impact of their contributions. Well done to LSE for 20 years of making a difference though this initiative and best wishes for the next 20. ”

Refuge



We are humbled by and grateful to the huge number of LSE students that have joined our London Feeding Programme on Thursday evenings come rain, snow, wind or shine to serve meals, drinks and snacks to members of our community that struggle with food insecurity and homelessness. ”

Amurt UK





LSE students have brought amazing skills, experiences, enthusiasm, and positivity to the Baytree Centre, making a significant impact on our delivery and strategy. Thank you to all who have volunteered at Baytree! ”

Baytree Centre



The contribution that LSE student volunteers have made to the work of The Childhood Trust has been transformative for disadvantaged children in London. From conducting research to producing our London Child Poverty Summit, LSE students have continually demonstrated professionalism, dedication, diligence and commitment in the work they have undertaken with us. ”

The Childhood Trust



The LSE Volunteer Centre have consistently provided amazing volunteers to support the community programmes at Coin Street, from individual volunteers who have gone above and beyond to support our youth projects and weekly activities to the team of volunteers who come and support the annual seniors party and always bring such enthusiasm and joy to the event. The LSE Volunteer Centre are passionate about their role which supports the voluntary sector in London and brings LSE students valuable and enriching experiences. As LSE alumni myself, I love hearing how things have changed at the university and the students experience. ”

Coin Street



Reflection on RAG presidency

Being a part of RAG has entirely changed my university experience for the better and it has helped shape me into the person I am today as I prepare to graduate from LSE this year.

I was initially hesitant to take on the role as I was unsure as to whether I would be able to do it justice. However, after organising the RAG Fashion Show in my second year, I realised RAG was exactly what I had been missing to make me feel fulfilled in my university life. It was something I knew I had to continue to be a part of!

My objective this year centred on ingraining charity and generosity into LSE's culture. I aimed to achieve this by placing fundraising at the centre of key community-building events, cultivating a sense of community around fundraising and volunteering, and mobilising a variety of clubs and societies to engage with our initiatives and launch their own. I am pleased to say that I firmly believe that the RAG committee has successfully realised this objective!

Throughout the year, we organised numerous large-scale, sold-out fundraising events, including the inaugural Casino Night and the RAG Fashion Show. We initiated socials for members, built a vibrant community among volunteers at our Charity and Vintage Shop, and facilitated a one-off volunteering opportunity at the Euston Foodbank. Collaborating with numerous clubs and societies, we engaged them



in our fundraising endeavours such as the RAGxAU Calendar, LSE's largest-ever Giving Tuesday, the Fashion Show, RAG Week, and even collaborated with ResLife for our Valentine's Rose sale! Additionally, we supported many societies in executing their own fundraising initiatives, including the Craft Society sale and Grimshaw Society's Palestine bake-sales. We also successfully integrated fundraising elements into other LSE events, collaborating with LooseTV for their Film Festival and the Dance Club for their annual showcase, among others.

I am immensely proud of the achievements of the RAG committee this year. I wholeheartedly encourage all students to get involved with RAG, as it offers a rewarding opportunity to volunteer your time for worthy causes while being part of, and building, an amazing community!

Noor Mansuri
BSc in Politics, 2024
LSESU RAG President







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 LSE Volunteer Centre

 volunteer@lse.ac.uk



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