



TRUST NEWS

Summer 2022

Trust helps 15 students in 2022 - but cost rises are set to pile on pressure

The trustees are pleased to be able to report that the Trust is supporting 15 needy students this year. The number is the same as last year, thanks to alumni in the UK who have given generously to the Trust. However, the trustees have serious concerns about the adverse impact of the global economic crisis arising from the war in Ukraine, following closely on the Covid pandemic.



Although the Trust was able to cover an inflation-related increase in bursaries for the current year, large and continuing rises in inflation since March will pose a significant challenge for next year. Students from low-income households will face rising costs as they try to obtain a university education. Many will not be able to start or continue without help such as that provided by the Trust. The negative impact on them, their families, communities and wider society in South Africa should not be underestimated.

At the same time, the ability of alumni in the UK to make donations to the Trust are likely to be constrained by inflationary pressures on their own resources. The Trust will face a real struggle to increase its funding for 2023 to be able to help the same number of students as this year when the costs are higher.

*The trustees urge you to **give as best you can** to avoid the Trust having to reduce support when the need is greater than ever.*

TRUSTEES: Roger Smith (Chair); Erin Bargate (Secretary); Richard Cooper (Treasurer); Penny Holmes; Tess Marsh; Colin Morgan.

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Durban meetings strengthen ties between University and Trust



Trust Chair Roger Smith was able to use a visit to South Africa in March to meet key UKZN staff members who assist with the work of the Trust. It was a welcome opportunity to hold discussions in person after two years when the Covid pandemic restricted communication to Zoom calls and emails.

Roger was pleased to have had several meetings in Durban that helped cement relations between the University and the Trust, to the benefit of the charity and its work.

He met Michael Davids and Hlumelo Ncoco of the Student Funding Centre, which helps distribute the Trust's funding to needy students at the University. Roger reported to Trustees: "I was left in no doubt as to the importance attached to the Trust's assistance and the SFC's commitment to delivering it."

Roger met the new chief executive of the UKZN Foundation, Steve Camp, for the first time. The importance of cooperation and collaboration was underlined in a very useful discussion.

Roger was pleased to see Finn Christensen and Desiree Govender from the Alumni Relations team again after a break of several years. Concerns around issues with communications with alumni in the UK were discussed, including problems with email messages, the expense of postal mailings and the opportunities and difficulties presented by trying to make use of social media.

Please note: do make sure the Alumni Relations team has your up-to-date contact details, including a valid email address - preferably for a personal email account rather than a work one. Work email addresses are more likely to fall out of use and many businesses use strict spam filters that can block bulk emails. It is a good idea to make sure the alumni@ukzn.ac.za email address is included in your contacts to try to avoid emails being sent into a spam folder.

Connect with the Trust on social media



Find us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/UKZNUKTrust

The Trust's website is at: www.ukznuktrust.org

Financial records highlight students' struggles with debt in striving for higher education

A Trustees' survey of the university accounts of the students being helped by the Trust in 2022 has found nearly all can be expected to end their studies with a debt burden despite the assistance received.

The individual details must be kept confidential but the analysis showed that, at the time a snapshot of the accounts was taken in May, the mean figure for the debt owed to UKZN was around R90,000 (or £4,500) for undergraduates and R23,000 (or £1,150) for honours students. The lowest debt recorded was just R3,000 (£150) and the highest R191,000 (£9,550).



The figures may change in the course of the year (if additional funding is obtained or additional costs arise) but they present a picture which underlines concern about the financial risks for students from lower-income households.

Could YOU raise some funds for the Trust?

The assistance provided by the Trust depends on the willingness of supporters to try to raise funds for the charity - in addition to any of their own donations that they might give. *You can make a difference by making such an effort.*



The Trust now uses **CAF Donate** (from the Charities Aid Foundation) for online giving. Donations to the Trust can be boosted by setting up campaign pages on the CAF website at www.cafonline.org, tied to specific fundraising activities and events.

Marathon runs are a popular choice but appeals in relation to a significant birthday or other occasion can bring in much-needed funds.

Contact **the Trust** if you can help. We will arrange the setting up of a CAF campaign page to be used by supporters of your fundraising effort to make online donations.

Eric Harber: an extraordinary life

The trustees are grateful to have received a donation from the family of anti-apartheid campaigner Eric Harber, a longstanding supporter of the Trust, who passed away last year at the age of 87 after a short illness.



His widow, Mary, told Trust Chair Roger Smith that Eric had received help from the British Council after arriving in the UK as a student in 1965. It is something that may have helped inspire him to back the Trust in its efforts to support needy students.

Eric's move to the UK from South Africa came after he was banned by the apartheid regime in 1963. He had been a member of the Liberal Party and an active opponent of the Government. As a lecturer in English at Rhodes University, he organised opposition to the award of an honorary degree to State President CR Swart and worked to expose corruption in elections in the Transkei.

He opted to take up an opportunity to study in Cambridge even though by leaving SA under a banning order he lost his citizenship.

Eric took part in the Stop the Seventy Tour campaign and helped disrupt the Springboks' rugby match against Newport in November 1969, for which he was charged with breach of the peace.

Eric was born in Springs, attended Maritzburg college and did a BA in English at the then University of Natal. After settling in London, he taught at various institutions.

He was a devout Catholic who visited Russia in the 1970s, smuggling in bibles and typewriters. He established a branch of the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (Cafod) in his parish in Swiss Cottage, where he met Mary.

Eric is survived by her, their daughter Rosalind and his sister Eleanor.

Please see the Trust's website for Eric's obituary.

