

Making a Difference

October 2023 - October 2024

Edition 9



Legal
**Social
Mobility**
Fund

Introduction

Welcome to the October 2024 edition of the Legal Social Mobility Fund's 'Making a Difference' report. We successfully balanced receiving 215 grant applications, whilst completing an extensive rebrand of the charity. In this report, we will be exploring how those approved for grants in the last year have been impacted and supported them in their journey to a career in law.

We believe that everyone, no matter their background, should have the means and access to enter the legal profession. According to the Social Mobility Commission and Solicitors Regulations Authority (SRA) in June 2023, 17% of the workforce in the legal sector are from a lower socio-economic background, compared to 39% of the total workforce in England and Wales. Clearly, this is not representative and something needs to change. We are proud to offer continued support for individuals from lower social-economic backgrounds working hard to their future career in law.

We support those entering the legal world to access appropriate work experience and support with their studies, which not only helps them realise their long-held career ambitions, but also enhances the workforce of commercial law firms across the UK. The financial assistance we provide is incredibly important. We are dedicated to ensuring that for those accessing the legal profession without a 'leg up', are supported. We hope to ensure that dedicated, aspiring solicitors can enter the legal profession and achieve their ambitions. This also helps to create a law field that is much more representative and diverse which in turn, will be beneficial in all areas of the legal sector.

The Legal Social Mobility Fund is incredibly pleased to be able to continue to work with our founders, our ongoing supporters and our newer supporters. Thank you all for your continued support.

Our vision

That financial barriers will no longer impact aspiring solicitors seeking to enter the legal profession in the United Kingdom.

Our mission

We aim to remove financial barriers to entering the legal profession for aspiring solicitors. We do this by providing financial assistance to those who need it most.

Our impact from October 2023 to October 2024

215

Applications received

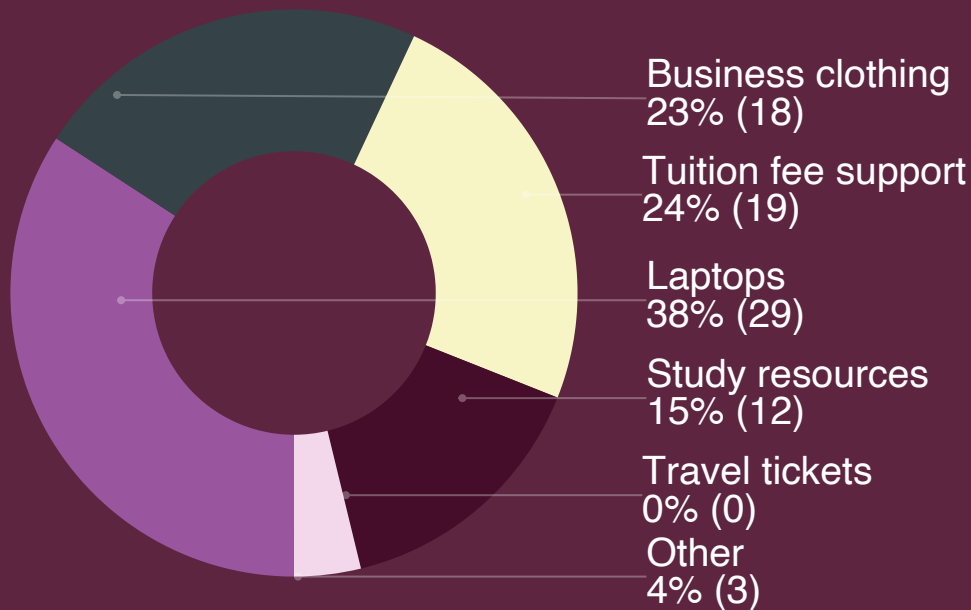
79

Awards granted

£501

Average grant value

Our grants



Tuition fee grants per institution

19 Legal Social Mobility Fund grant recipients were supported to attend four esteemed law institutions in the UK.

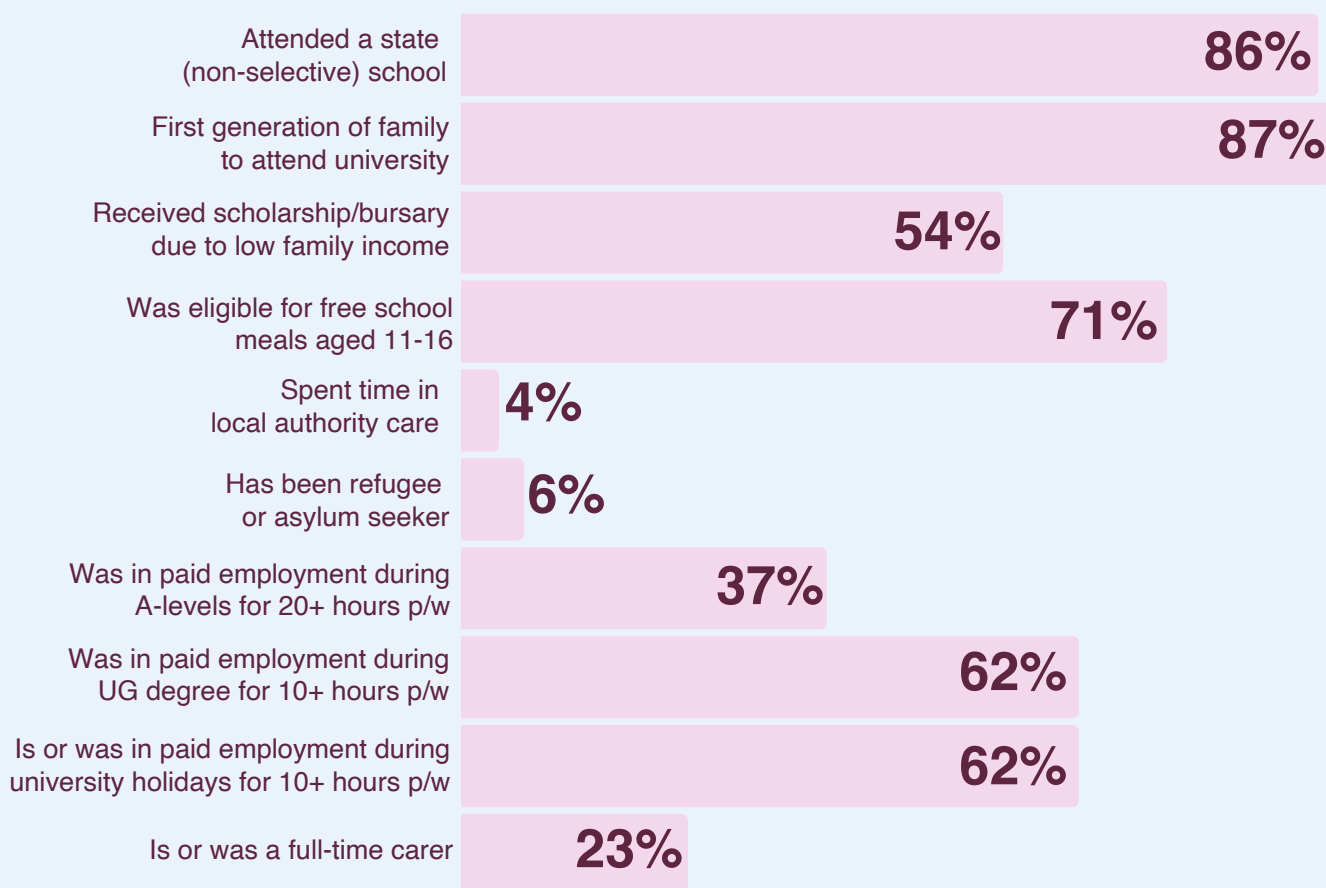


A £5,000 donation could help approximately 15 students with laptops, business clothing and/or study resources.

Our impact from October 2023 to October 2024

The application process assesses applicants on a wide range of accepted social mobility indicators, ensuring that our support goes to the right people. The following chart shows just how many of these indicators are prevalent in our beneficiaries.

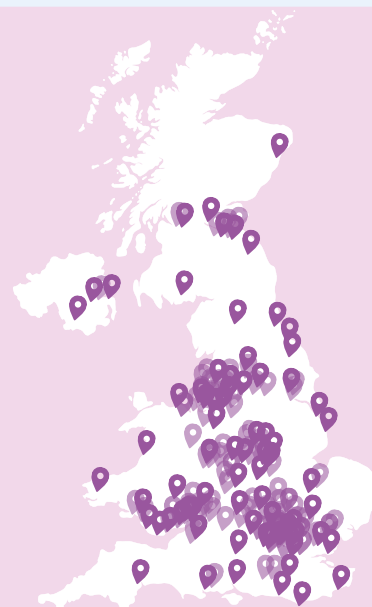
Our successful applicants



Total % of approved applicants from October 2023 to October 2024

This year we recognised that there were several areas in the UK we did not receive as many applications from. These areas included Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. By reaching out to their most socially mobile universities, we have increased our geographic reach substantially.

This map shows the approximate locations of our beneficiaries this year.



Who we are supporting...



Beneficiaries of the Study Resources Grant

The Legal Social Mobility Fund has through the years provided me with support that I wouldn't have been able to access. As a young mother, this has been invaluable in providing me with what I need not only for my studies, but further providing me access to professional work experience as part of my degree.

Receiving the grant helped me to fund study resources such as books I otherwise wouldn't be able to access

- University of Derby Student



Beneficiaries of the Scholarship Grants

I cannot put into words how grateful I am for the support of LSMF. I would not have been able to fund my course otherwise and it would have taken me significantly longer to qualify as a solicitor. I am so so grateful for their assistance and aid in helping me in my future career.

I do feel it has made me more determined to completely my goals. Before receiving the grant I felt almost hopeless as I knew I would not have been able to fund the course myself. It has certainly opened new career doors for me.

- BPP University Student

Who we are supporting...

Beneficiaries of the Business Clothing Grant



This support has helped me feel more comfortable and professional in environments where I previously felt out of place—an ongoing challenge throughout my legal journey.

Having the right attire has allowed me to focus on my work rather than feeling self-conscious, enabling me to perform at my best and feel that I truly belong in the legal profession.

This experience has not only opened doors but also strengthened my commitment to my goals, making me feel well-prepared for the next steps in my career.

- University of Cardiff Student

At the time when I received the grant, I had insight events and first year schemes with law firms to attend. This grant made me feel much more confident by enabling me to purchase the business attire that I needed.

- University of Warwick Student

This grant opened the doors for city law by removing these barriers and was a massive component of me securing a training contract with the firm.

- University of Nottingham Student

“ This newfound confidence was pivotal; I was able to successfully secure a training contract offer during one of the vacation schemes—a milestone that has been the highlight of my legal career so far. The grant didn’t just alleviate a financial burden; it instilled in me a stronger belief in my own potential. Knowing that someone believed in my abilities and was willing to invest in my future has been immensely encouraging and reinforced my commitment to a career in law. ”

Who we are supporting...



Beneficiaries of the Laptop Grant

Receiving the LSMF grant has made a significant difference in both my financial situation and my journey toward a legal career. Coming from a disadvantaged, working-class background, managing the financial demands of university has been challenging. The grant enabled me to acquire a touchscreen laptop, which has proven invaluable.

With mobility issues, having a lightweight, touchscreen device has greatly improved my ability to keep up with my studies, as I can now easily navigate, annotate, and access course materials on the go. This enhanced access to university work has been crucial for me to stay engaged and excel in my studies, despite the financial and physical challenges I face.

- Queen Mary University Student

My laptop was already deteriorating from my undergraduate degree and it took the financial pressure off of paying for another laptop. It has allowed me to study at university with greater ease

- University of Southampton Student

The grant has not only eased financial stress but has also opened doors in terms of my professional development. With improved access to my studies, I've been able to make the most of opportunities to develop legal skills and network with professionals. It has also changed my perspective on the barriers faced by students from backgrounds like mine. The grant has shown me the importance of support systems in helping students like me achieve their goals, and it has reinforced my commitment to pursue a career in law, where I can one day give back to communities facing similar challenges.

Who we are supporting...

Beneficiaries of the Accommodation Grants



The Legal Social Mobility Fund does not usually provide financial assistance towards accommodation requests. However, we received a few requests of this nature this year, particularly from those who secured vacation schemes at top law firms. These individuals were unable to afford accommodation expenses and due to the structure of vacation schemes, they would not be paid until the scheme had finished. Some law firms unfortunately refused to provide financial assistance in this instance. Therefore, the Legal Social Mobility Fund provided assistance to these individuals

Before receiving the grant, I was concerned about how I would manage the costs associated with my summer placement at the law firm, such as travel, accommodation, and daily expenses. These financial pressures were a significant source of stress and threatened to overshadow the opportunity to gain invaluable experience in my chosen field.

The grant alleviated these concerns entirely, allowing me to focus my energy and attention on the placement itself. I was able to fully immerse myself in the work, take on challenges, and approach every task with enthusiasm and diligence. This focus not only enabled me to produce work to the best of my ability but also gave me the confidence to engage with fellow interns and associates. This grant has had a lasting impact on my perspective and goals. Experiencing this kind of support has reinforced my commitment to pursuing a career in law and I am even more determined to make a difference in this field.

- University of Aberdeen Student

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If it was not for this grant, it would have been difficult (if not impossible) for me to afford two weeks accommodation in London for my vacation scheme and professional attire to wear throughout this time. This grant opened the doors for city law by removing these barriers and was a massive component of me securing a training contract with the firm.

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Who we are supporting...



Beneficiaries are recommending us...

I cannot recommend the LSMF more. The help and support and reassurance I have received has been life changing for me and I am so so grateful.

- BPP University Student



The team were friendly, understanding and made sure that I had everything I needed for my vacation scheme. They helped me afford essentials and I felt supported and updated on every step of the application.

- University of Nottingham Student

It would highly recommend the LSMF grant to others in a similar position to mine because of the tremendous support it offers, both financially and academically. As someone from a disadvantaged, working-class background, the financial burden of university can often feel overwhelming, but the LSMF grant alleviated that stress, allowing me to focus on my studies and career aspirations without constant worry.

Moreover, the LSMF grant has given me a sense of confidence and support that has allowed me to push forward with my career goals, knowing that there are resources in place to help me succeed. It's an opportunity that can open doors and change the trajectory of someone's academic and professional journey, and I truly believe that students in similar positions can greatly benefit from it.

- Queen Mary University Student

100%

of beneficiaries strongly agree that our grant helped ease their financial situation and helped facilitate the progression of your legal career.

Who we are supporting...



We asked our beneficiaries what their career goals are. Here are some of their responses for inspiration...

I am set to begin my training contract in September 2026, and I am incredibly excited to establish myself as a legal professional. My primary goal is to specialise in commercial law, although I am also deeply interested in technology and data protection—an area I hope to explore further as my career progresses. Ultimately, my aspiration is to become a partner at a law firm, which would be a significant milestone for me as a woman from one of the most deprived areas in Wales, without any prior connections to the legal industry.

- University of Cardiff Student

I envision completing my Training Contract at a Full-Service law firm with a dedicated medical negligence sector. This aligns with my long-term goal of specialising in medical law, where I can advocate for clients wronged through medical errors and systemic issues in healthcare. I am particularly passionate about using my skills to support those who face significant disadvantages or lack access to justice.

- University of Aberdeen Student

My goal is to build a career that blends both solicitors' advisory roles and barristers' courtroom experience, creating a well-rounded legal professional capable of handling complex cases and offering varied legal expertise to my clients. Ultimately, I hope to make a positive impact in the legal industry and help people from underrepresented backgrounds find success within the system.

- Queen Mary University Student

I have accepted a training contract with Akin and hope to train and qualify there.

- University of Nottingham Student

I am looking forward to qualifying as a solicitor in 2025 with the help of this grant!

- BPP University Student

With thanks to our supporters

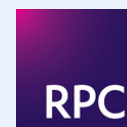
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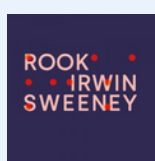
GOLD



SILVER



SUPPORTERS



For more information:



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