

Making a Difference

December 2023

Edition 8



aspiringsolicitors
foundation



Introduction

Welcome to the December 2023 edition of the AS Foundation's 'Making a Difference' report. We've had our most successful year yet with 365 applications! 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 37% 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 AS Foundation 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 U.K.

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 January to December 2023

365

Applications received

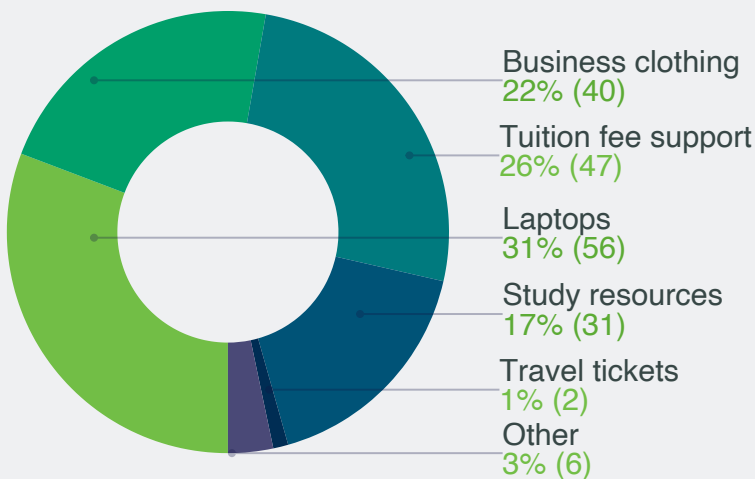
182

Awards granted

£585

Average grant value

Our grants



Our applicants

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.



Tuition fee grants per institution

47 AS Foundation grant recipients were supported to attend four esteemed law institutions in the UK.



19 Applicants



13 Applicants



10 Applicants

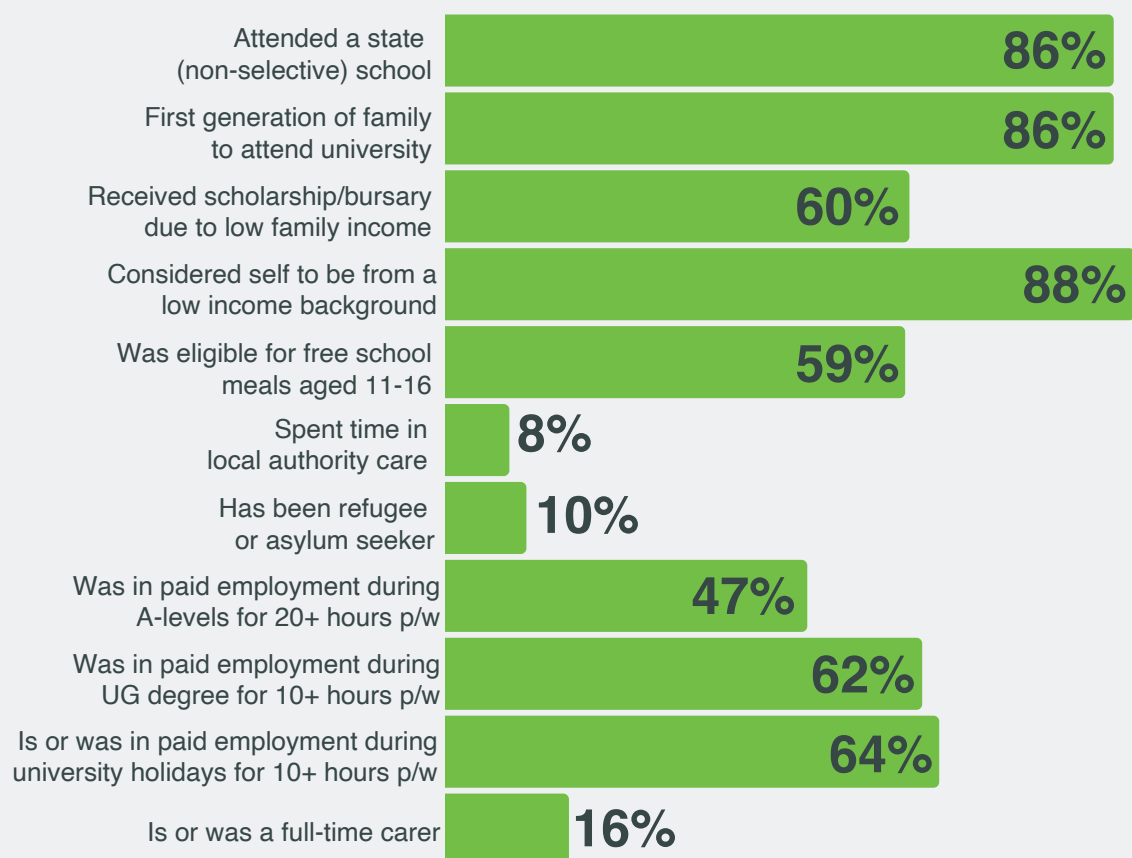


5 Applicants

Our impact in 2023

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 January to October 2023

90%

Of beneficiaries who care for a loved one, also work during term time

26%

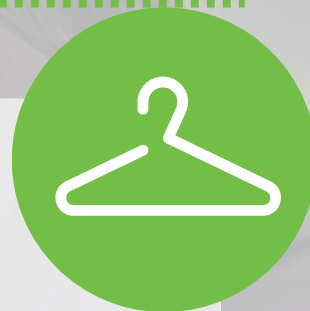
More applications made to the AS Foundation in 2023 than in 2022

50%

Of all applications made in 2023 were approved by trustees and granted

Who we are supporting...

Beneficiaries of the Business Clothing Grant



With an internship fast approaching and few professional clothes, I chose to apply for a grant offered by the AS Foundation. I was able to receive a grant and purchase the clothes I needed. This ensured that I presented myself as expected in a corporate environment. Both I and the AS Foundation understood the importance of presentation.

Without this grant, I would not have been able to make the positive impression that I did! Receiving a grant from the AS Foundation meant that I did not have to stress about my financial position and purchasing clothing. I was easily able to focus on my studies.

- University of Cambridge Student

I faced the hardship of winter approaching and not having suitable business clothing to fit the season.

Through receiving the grant I have been able to afford a warm coat which has made me feel as if I fit in with others in the office. I have also been able to purchase further office wear to ensure I am warm in the winter season. I am extremely grateful for the AS foundations grant as without it, I am not sure how I would have been able to afford such items.

The grant ...has definitely made me feel more confident for the future should I have to attend any events/ vacation schemes in the colder seasons, as I now have suitable office wear.

- Cardiff University Student

I have received 2 grants from AS Foundation and I would highly recommend for others to apply. Many students are met with obstacles that are out of their control but that can significantly impact their performance. AS Foundation provides support so that you can get a fair chance at doing your best and not being limited by your background.

Who we are supporting...



Beneficiaries of the Study Resources Grant

Growing up, financial hardships were a constant in my life. During my school studies, I was eligible for free school meals and both of my parents never attended university, which added another layer of unfamiliarity with the academic landscape. This lack of familial experience heightened the financial strain, making the prospect of pursuing higher education seem daunting.

Receiving the grant has undeniably had a positive impact on both my studies and career goals. The financial aid provided by the AS Foundation has been instrumental in alleviating the burden of educational expenses. This financial support not only addresses immediate concerns but also serves as a beacon of hope, breaking down barriers and allowing me to navigate my academic journey with newfound confidence and determination.

After purchasing relevant textbooks with the aid received, my studies have been greatly enhanced. These textbooks have become invaluable resources, offering in-depth insights and knowledge crucial for my academic pursuits.

The grant has not only opened doors to essential educational materials but has also changed my perspective, instilling confidence and reinforcing my commitment to achieving success in my chosen career path as a solicitor.

- University of Leeds Student

The grant has had an incredibly positive impact on me and my career goals. It contributed to the confidence I felt during my vacation scheme which has led to me receiving a training contract at my dream firm.

Who we are supporting...



Beneficiaries of the Laptop Grant

Without this grant I would have been extremely restricted in my examination period (given all my exams were online) as my laptop unexpectedly had broken. As I am from a low income background I was unable to quickly invest in a new laptop without the support to conduct my exams.

It supported me through all my final year university exams and research for post graduate careers. We heavily rely on devices like laptops for everyday use so having this grant has supported me greatly and further motivated me to be successful in my legal career so I can give back and support future generations.

- Birmingham University Student

I am grateful to the AS Foundation for providing me with this laptop, I no longer have to worry about using my faulty laptop and wasting hours trying to get it up and running before even starting a task.

Receiving this laptop was just special as it was a gesture of kindness and support from the AS Foundation, it motivated me to continue to pursue my career aspirations no matter the struggles and bumps I may face. Help is always out there you just need to be brave enough to ask for it.

- Leeds Beckett University Student

Receiving a laptop has helped me get on with my work and complete essays on time. I feel as though I will be able to reach my goal of becoming a solicitor with a fair chance now that I have a laptop to complete my work.

Who we are supporting...



Beneficiaries of the Scholarship Grants

Coming from a background where my family could not afford to help me financially, I have always had to work extra hours whilst studying to fund things myself. Becoming a solicitor is very expensive and receiving this grant has lifted a huge weight off my shoulders. I feel motivated to succeed even more and I hope one day I am able to help aspiring solicitors like myself. Whether that be financially or mentoring.

- University of Law Student

Receiving the grant has allowed me to decrease my hours at work and fully commit my time and energy to my studies while remaining financially secure. It has given me a peace of mind and a chance to perform to the best of my ability.

- University of Law Student

The AS foundation grant has eased these hardships because it has put less of a strain on my mental health and reduced the amount of hours I have had to go to work.

- University of Law Student

I often feel chocked by...financial burdens...I learned from a peer...about AS foundation. The deadline passed when I applied but AS foundation opens the door for me with patience. I am truly grateful as AS foundation tried best to accommodate my request for grants towards my tuition fees.

Upon receiving the news for part grant from AS foundation, I feel as if my intention for further studies in law is affirmed in a special way. The immediate impact of this grant is I do not want to disappoint all my supporters including AS foundation.

- University of Bristol Student

There is no complex form to fill up and no lengthy process involved. The grant I received does help ease some of my financial hardships . I genuinely feel that AS foundation has been trying to remove barriers for all aspiring solicitors, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds.

Who we are supporting...



Beneficiaries are recommending us...

Whilst asking for financial support can feel overwhelming and embarrassing ultimately there is no shame in asking for help. Your circumstances are not who you are so if you are eligible for a grant then definitely apply. Support is here to be used not be shamed for.

- University of Birmingham Student



If you are an individual who is committed to making a positive impact in the legal field, but feel overwhelmed with all associated costs around studying law, you should strongly consider applying for the AS Foundation Grant. This will certainly be a strategic step towards achieving your goal by easing financial burdens and fostering a supportive foundation for future success.

- University of Leeds Student

I would definitely recommend to apply. I applied and in all honesty, didn't have much hope in getting a response, however seeing a response email come through confirming my successful application alleviated a significant amount of stress and made me feel overjoyed that there was an organisation that did want to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- Cardiff University Student



Who we are supporting...

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

I am a first year Cambridge English student interested in becoming a solicitor. I have so far interned with the law firm, Taylor Wessing and the management consulting firm, Baringa. I intend to attain even more experience to demonstrate my commitment and passion for corporate law. I am excited about joining a firm that values race and gender equality enough to show evidence of this in its pro bono activities, retention, widening participation opportunities and partnerships.

- University of Cambridge Student

(I hope to)...Become a family solicitor by doing the LPC and training contract after I finish uni this year. Something which now see achievable because of the internship I was able to gain with the help of the finding as they have expressed an interest in me going back to local authority after uni. I want to be a family solicitor because I am a child of family court myself. I want to be able to give children the voice I never felt I had.

- Liverpool John Moores University Student

I want to become an Employment law solicitor potentially with some property law as well. Having completed the necessary years and experience I wish to become a sheriff and then judge in Scotland's courts. Finally I wish to help teach aspiring legal professionals either in College or University.

- University of Edinburgh Student

I am starting the LPC LLM at The University of Law in September 2023. I plan to complete the LPC and continue applying to firms for training contracts. My aspiration is to be a corporate solicitor. I look forward to the day I qualify and looking back at how far I have come.

-University of Law Student

With thanks to our supporters

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please visit:**

TheASF.org.uk
