'We believe that our young people and their families will be among those hardest hit by the COVID-19 crisis and that as the economic after-effects of the lockdown are felt, they will suffer a further blow to their education and futures. With a network of local learning centres and established relationships, IntoUniversity is uniquely placed to keep them on track.'

Dr Rachel Carr, Chief Executive and Co-Founder

To sustain our network of vital learning centres and reach new communities where young people need our support, IntoUniversity is launching an ambitious fundraising plan to raise £3m by 31st August 2021.
The challenges facing our students

Immediate challenges:
- Highly vulnerable to the adverse effects of living in crowded accommodation, typically with no access to outside space;
- Often no space for home study;
- They have access to far fewer resources to stimulate and engage them – including laptops and other devices;
- Many parents are struggling to support their children’s home learning;
- Some students may be at risk of a decline in their mental health;
- Families will be facing a range of more pressing financial and practical problems and education may not be their first priority.

Long-term challenges:
- Up to six months learning loss – the attainment gap will widen further;
- The significant negative impact on their mental health;
- Employability prospects and opportunities reducing at a time when university places and jobs are more competitive.

‘We are concerned about the impact of school closures on disadvantaged families, and it is likely during this period of lockdown some middle class children will have benefitted from extensive use of private tutoring, which will exacerbate education gaps further. We are also concerned poorer pupils are under-predicted in GCSEs and A-levels, and students due to take exams next year will struggle with learning losses, and being unable to attend university access schemes in person.’

Professor Lee Elliot Major, Professor of Social Mobility, University of Exeter

‘Children from better-off families are spending 30% more time on home learning than are those from poorer families.’

Institute of Fiscal Studies
Our response strategy

Immediate response:
The COVID-19 crisis has necessitated the temporary closure of all IntoUniversity centres. We are now offering a remote service to our students based around telephone support predominantly, which does not depend upon online access, but we will also be using email where possible. Whilst initial calls have been primarily pastoral to gauge how students are coping, they have now transitioned to more structured academic support calls.

‘IntoUniversity hasn’t just been providing me with academic support, they have also been checking on my wellbeing. At the moment, times are difficult for everyone so it’s nice to have someone I can talk to. Support over the phone is different to the support at the centre but it’s not more difficult to get help. I have received lots of support helping me to think about my future.’

Secondary student from IntoUniversity Bristol South

Long-term recovery plan:
When our centres reopen, our first priority is to help our students get back on track so that they can recover from the impact of the crisis. To do this, support will include:

- **Academic Support** – We will work with over 3,000 students to support them in specific curriculum areas, pairing students in particular need with volunteers to work one-to-one with them where possible;

- **Structured Workshops** – We will work with our Primary and Secondary partner schools to deliver our FOCUS programme to help over 40,000 young people recover learning and continue to develop their soft skills;

- **Mentoring** – Our mentors will support over 800 young people with academic mentoring sessions on specific curriculum areas.

‘When the dust settles on this crisis we believe that large numbers of disadvantaged students will have fallen behind their peers. The response across the sector should be to connect with them and provide the compensation strategies they will need to bounce back.’

Dr Hugh Rayment-Pickard, Chief Strategy Officer and Co-Founder, IntoUniversity
The Fundraising Challenge

At a time when our students need us most, we have to ensure that our network of learning centres is sustained. To make this happen we plan to raise £3m by August 2021.

Immediate Response

To ensure our students avoid the potentially catastrophic consequences of significant learning loss during the school shut down and remain focused on their education, we have adapted our entire service to telephone and online support for our students every week. This approach accounts for the digital poverty some of our students may be experiencing, to ensure a consistent and accessible service during this period.

Funding will enable our staff to speak with over 3,000 students each week, providing them with the structure, encouragement and pastoral support they need to stay on track.

To ensure we can call and support over 3,000 students in the final term of 19/20 we need:

£250,000

Long-term Response

When it is safe to reopen our centres our students will urgently need help to support their recovery from the severe after-effects of the lockdown. The relevance of IntoUniversity centres has been amplified by the COVID-19 crisis, which are uniquely positioned to provide the recovery support needed to get young people back on track after the disruption to their learning caused by school closures. Funding will enable our staff to deliver academic support, structured workshops, mentoring and enrichment opportunities to over 40,000 students.

Supporting this campaign will also enable us to continue to grow our network of centres into new locations in Scotland, East Anglia, the North East and North West.

To ensure we support over 40,000 students in 20/21 we need:

£2,750,000

‘Young people from the most disadvantaged areas of the country will need local, effective recovery programmes in the months ahead. IntoUniversity is perfectly placed to deliver this support to tens of thousands of young people across the UK.’

Andy Ratcliffe, CEO, Impetus

We are hugely grateful for your support and encouragement to date. Please stick with us and help us stay focused on supporting our students as we have done since 2002.

For more information please contact:

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