



A Generation of Transformation  
- 20 years of **IntoUniversity**



# A Generation of Transformation

## Contents

Reflections on a generation of transformation - A letter from our Co-Founder	4
Looking back on 20 years of impact	6
Primary Pioneers	8
Place and University Partnerships	10
A collaborative, community-based approach to tackling educational inequalities	11
Volunteering	14
Insight into work	15
The future of technology and social mobility in the UK	16
The next 20 years – supporting future generations to reach their potential	18
Join us on the next stage of our journey	20



# Reflections on a generation of transformation

## A letter from our Co-Founder

Dear friends,

20 years ago I set up a small education project at my local community centre, round the corner from where I still live in North Kensington. Its aim was to provide opportunities for 75 young people to realise their wonderful talents and reach their undoubted potential to go to university or to achieve another chosen aspiration. And go on to achieve that potential they certainly did! A lawyer, a social worker, a builder, a restaurant manager, an Oxbridge graduate, a blue badge tourist guide, a civil servant, a teacher... these are just some of the success stories of those young people that I had the enjoyment and privilege to work with back in 2003.

Little did I imagine when it all began that the tiny seed, first sowed in North Kensington twenty years ago, would grow into today's flourishing charity, serving 39 disadvantaged neighbourhoods through our network of local learning centres. From Glasgow to Great Yarmouth, Nottingham to Newcastle, through the collaboration of hundreds of schools and universities, the resolute support of local families, the thoughtful commitment of corporate partners, the kind expertise of thousands of volunteers, the incredible generosity of funders, and the dedicated expertise of a wonderful staff team, **Into**University is now the leading provider of widening participation services in the UK. And at the heart of it all are the 45,000 young people we support each year who work so tenaciously hard to realise their dreams and ambitions. We are so proud of them all.

So as we reach the end of our anniversary year, we wanted to look back to celebrate the achievements of all of the young people who have been with us on the **Into**University journey over the last twenty years. The 50,000 thousand 10 year olds who've stood at the front of a university lecture theatre clad in mortar board and gown graduating from their year 6 FOCUS week; the mentees who've baked cakes, played Dobble and learnt about UCAS applications; the inquisitive Year 9 students who've relished hearing volunteers share their Careers in FOCUS introductions to jobs as paramedics, actuaries, lawyers and TV producers; the 19,000 students who've come to study our bespoke curriculum with us after-school on our Academic Support programme and become classroom Chemists and Photographers, Nutritionists and Classicists, Engineers and Anthropologists.

Of course we cannot share with you here all of their individual names - but I do hope you enjoy reading about some of the numbers behind all of their stories, as well as a few snapshots of just some of their individual achievements.

Important as it most certainly is, an anniversary should not just be a moment to look back and celebrate with nostalgia the successes of our past students - it is also a key opportunity to look and think forward about the priorities to come in the years ahead. For **Into**University's learning centres are needed today and tomorrow more than ever and our task is not yet done. It is imperative that we continue to deliver an impactful, high-quality and transformative service which meets the needs of the next generation of young people. So you can also find in the following pages a taster of some of the upcoming key priorities for the organisation, as well as some commentary on the future of education and potential challenges and opportunities for those working within the social mobility sector.

The entrepreneurial flame from which **Into**University was lit continues to burn brightly. And that is thanks to everyone who has supported us on this journey over the last 20 years. And it is thanks to everyone who shares our wholehearted and passionate belief in the importance of continuing to strive together for a future where all young people are given the opportunities and support they need and deserve to realise their amazing potential and to grasp their dreams.

Here's to the next 20 years - and the next generation of transformation.



**Dr Rachel Carr**  
Co-Founder & Chief Executive  
**Into**University



“From Glasgow to Great Yarmouth, Nottingham to Newcastle, through the collaboration of hundreds of schools and universities, the resolute support of local families, the thoughtful commitment of corporate partners, the kind expertise of thousands of volunteers, the incredible generosity of funders, and the dedicated expertise of a wonderful staff team, **Into**University is now the leading provider of widening participation services in the UK. And at the heart of it all are the 45,000 young people we support each year who work so tenaciously hard to realise their dreams and ambitions.

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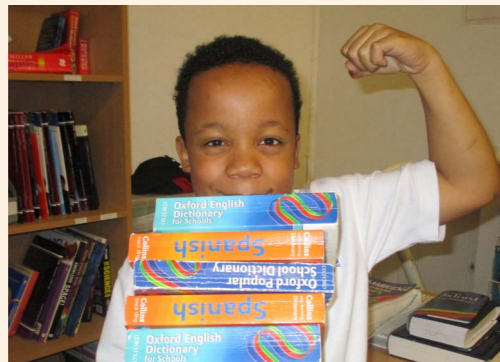


# Looking back on 20 years of impact

The past 20 years has seen **Into**University grow from a homework club in North Kensington to a national charity with centres across England and Scotland, covering many of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the UK. The growth has been remarkable, and most importantly, has enabled us to impact the lives of so many more young people. In the first year that **Into**University was launched, Rachel and her co-founders set themselves what they thought at the time was the ambitious target of working with 75 students in that year. Now 20 years on, over 190,000 students have been through the **Into**University programme across our 39 centres, and we're continuing to grow, with more centres due to be launched in 2024.

## Key highlights

▶ over **190,000** students have been through the **Into**University programme

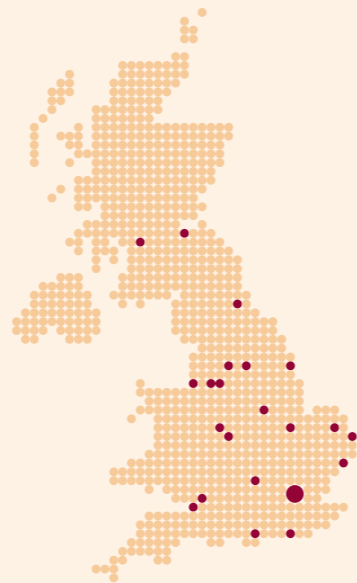


▶ **39** centres and we're continuing to grow, with more centres due to be launched in 2024

▶ **33,300** Academic Support sessions

▶ **29,180** in-school workshops

▶ **4.4 million** contact hours



**2002**  
The first **Into**University centre opened in North Kensington



**2007**  
**Into**University opened our second centre in Lambeth



**2010**  
**Into**University wins Charity of the Year for the first time



**2011**  
First **Into**University centre opens outside of London in Nottingham  
**Into**University's first Impact Report is published  
**Into**University reaches **10,000** students supported

**2012**  
**Into**University celebrates its 10th anniversary

**2015**  
**Into**University wins charity of the year for the second time.  
**Into**University reaches 20 centres in 7 cities across England

**2016**  
Big City Bright Future internship launches in partnership with corporate partner, BlackRock

**2018**  
**Into**University reaches **100,000** students supported



**2019**  
The Khadija Saye Arts at **Into**University programme was founded

**2020**  
**Into**University pivots to remote support during the pandemic, closing centres for the first time

**2021**  
**Into**University opened three centres in Scotland, becoming a bi-national charity

**2022**  
**Into**University wins its third Charity of the Year award



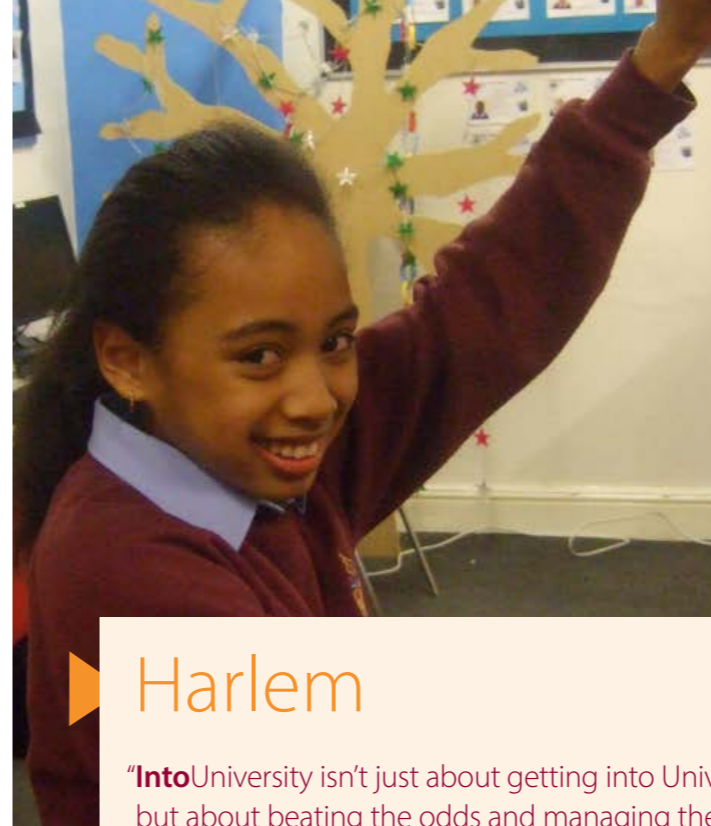
**2023**  
**Into**University reaches 39 centres in 22 towns and cities across England and Scotland

# Primary Pioneers

Our very first Primary FOCUS Weeks took place in 2003, introducing 10 and 11 year old students to the boundless possibilities for their educational and professional careers. In the last 20 years, we have expanded this pioneering work to include students as young as 7, introducing them to the concept of a career and a university education before decisions about futures are made and educational paths are set.

Now early intervention is regarded as best practice. UCAS's 2016 report stated that being certain about Higher Education by age ten means a child is 2.6 times more likely to end up at a competitive university than someone who decides in their late teens.

We're proud that, for the last 20 years, our Primary students have been writing their ambitions on tree leaves which are then presented and displayed to their class. We estimate that since we started, over 50,000 young people have written about their future plans on a University Tree leaf.



## Harlem

**"IntoUniversity isn't just about getting into University but about beating the odds and managing the unpredictable and often unequal circumstances so many of us find ourselves in"**

Harlem is a 22-year old Reception Teacher. Fifteen years ago, she walked into the **IntoUniversity** Lambeth centre (now Kennington) for the first time aged 7. Here, she shares what made the **IntoUniversity** experience so special for her and others like her.

"There is a video some of you may have seen on the **IntoUniversity** website, outlining my journey with the charity, which started 15 years ago. The voice recording for that video was taken days after my grandmother and main caregiver had passed away. I could tell you about the A grades, the Russell Group universities and the promising career in education I have embarked on in recent months, but that would only scratch the surface of what an **IntoUniversity** centre did for me.

Many of us start by attending a homework club, but that quietly turns into something more, which is difficult to convey in words or statistics. The centres themselves become relationships, memories, dreams and aspirations - intangible things. Every **IntoUniversity** centre becomes a part of a community - a constant. So when I, at 18 years old, just about to sit my A-level exams and felt like my whole world was caving in, it was the centre in Lambeth that I retreated to. I threw myself into a space that I knew, that was safe and that was predictable. I could be the Harlem that held very strong political views that she wasn't afraid of sharing, loved to read and hated quadratic equations. It offered me the space to focus on the not so big things and an hour or two that didn't feel quite so heavy.

The **IntoUniversity** centres can mean so much to so many and are spaces that meet with people at points of celebration and in more challenging times, but no matter what you are always met with a kind smile and the opportunity for a chat.

I recall sitting with Laura Morley (then Centre leader) opening my SATs results, speaking to **IntoUniversity** staff as soon as I got my A-Level results and meeting with my mentor after my first year at Durham feeling out of my depth and drowning in old Norse. Most importantly though, I remember standing in front of my headteacher and other very important looking people, ten years ago giving a speech at the **IntoUniversity** ten year anniversary celebration, not knowing the success the next 10 years would bring.

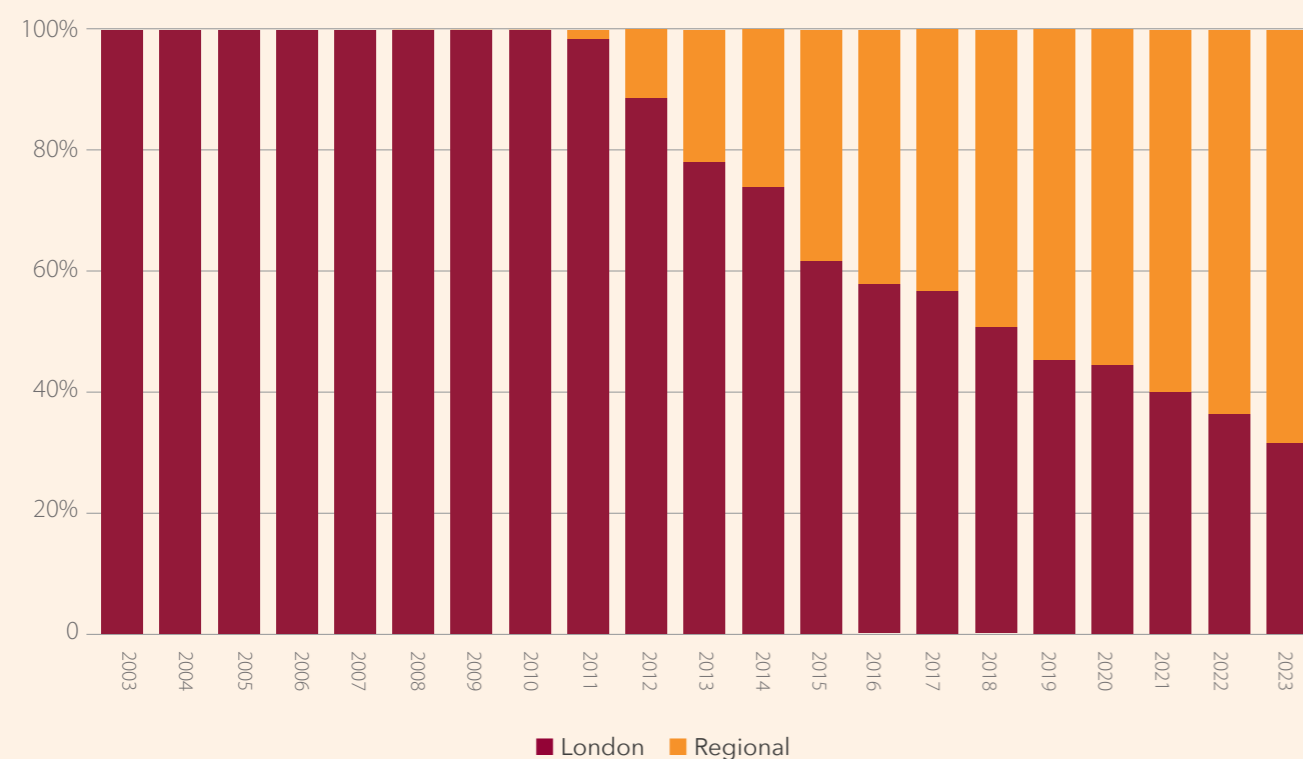
It's this steadfast commitment to the long term and the cultivation of relationships that allows me to write so passionately and be as involved as I was 10 years ago, despite ageing out of Academic support, Primary, and Secondary FOCUS. Hopefully, this is not just a reflection of my inability to leave the charity alone but an example of how **IntoUniversity** remains consistent and effective in its long-term support, as they remain my biggest cheerleaders in all my big and small moments. All our lives are made up of big and small moments that culminate to make up our experiences and essentially who we are. The moments I have mentioned seemed insignificant at the time but upon reflection have been the most poignant. **IntoUniversity** isn't just about getting into University but about beating the odds and managing the unpredictable and often unequal circumstances so many of us find ourselves in. The centres exist for moments, when you find a spelling, equation or topic hard or when you've had a long day and the last thing you want to do is practise the thing you're not so good at and the moments of accepting offers or staying away from home for the first time."

## Place and University Partnerships

We believe in the importance of supporting young people in their communities. Being in neighbourhoods over the long term and building relationships with local families and organisations means that **Into**University centres can become a trusted part of the communities in which they are based.

One of the defining features of the last 20 years has been **Into**University's ability to scale our services and expand our programme, firstly to other areas of London, and then to other major UK cities and beyond. But each centre is just like our very first: a safe, local hub for young people, based on their doorsteps.

### Regional vs London



In 2009, there were no regional **Into**University centres and less than 15 years later, our regional centres make up the majority of our network. This expansion is in no small part due to our collaboration with universities.

Our university partnerships are essential to our work in local communities. Their dedicated and long-term support of our centres means we can be in neighbourhoods over the long term and build relationships with local families and organisations, becoming a trusted part of the communities where we are based.

## A collaborative, community-based approach to tackling educational inequalities



**By Pete Bruce, Head of Student Recruitment Outreach, UoN**

*The University of Nottingham (UoN) joined forces with **Into**University in 2011, building on an existing programme of outreach work. The partnership saw the charity branch out of London for the first time, and the success of this collaboration birthed a formula for regional intervention which has now been replicated in neighbourhoods all across England and Scotland. In this article, Peter Bruce, Head of Student Recruitment Outreach at UoN, reflects on one of our longest running partnerships.*

My first experience of **Into**University must have been around 2013, when **Into**University staff from the Nottingham Central team (one of three centres here in Nottingham) made contact with me. At the time, I was teaching at a local school, and the **Into**University team wanted to establish a link with my school to run a series of free FOCUS workshops with a cohort of young people in each year group. The programme sounded amazing and, following a quick chat with the Headteacher, I signed us up as a partner. Over the next few years, as I coordinated the school side of the partnership with **Into**University, I observed the high quality of what they were delivering, the professional, enthusiastic and values-driven approach from the **Into**University staff and the impact that their programmes were having on the young people in our school. I realised quickly that this was a very special organisation.

Fast forward to April 2016 and I took up the post of Partnerships Manager in the Widening Participation team at the University of Nottingham. My main role was to manage the University's partnership with **Into**University. Here, I was fortunate to be able to build on the fantastic work of colleagues in the WP team who had established and developed the partnership from 2011 onwards. Our University partnership was the first of its kind for **Into**University, marking its first step as a national education charity. It led to the setting up of the first **Into**University centres outside of London, serving three Nottingham communities – St Ann's, Hyson Green and the Broxtowe estate - all in constituencies where child poverty rates are particularly high.

**Each of the three **Into**University centres has since developed strong and sustained relationships with local schools as well as with local families, whose children attend the weekly after-school Academic Support sessions. These young people turn up week in, week out to the **Into**University centres largely because they are based in, and have become, an established and well-respected part of their communities.**

Throughout the past 12 years of this collaborative partnership, more than 17,000 local young people have received support and encouragement from **Into**University, helping them to do well at school and go on to University or another chosen ambition. As a University, it has enabled us to significantly expand our outreach work and to engage with young people to support the ongoing work of addressing educational inequality in our city. To date, several hundred of our University student volunteers have contributed several thousands of hours of one-to-one mentoring at the **Into**University centres in the heart of these communities, countless academics and student groups have delivered academic sessions at the centres and, as a result of the partnership, we've welcomed thousands of young people and their families onto campus. Our Widening Participation and Outreach team has also developed a bespoke family learning programme in conjunction with **Into**University. In addition, nearly 500 young people (of which over 170 through the **Into**University Nottingham centres) have gone on to study at the University of Nottingham having been involved with **Into**University across the whole network.

Here at the University of Nottingham we are incredibly proud of our partnership with **Into**University and its sustained, place-based approach to educational outreach. As a local teacher commented, "Many of the students would never have seen University as an option for them and **Into**University has given them the opportunity to be more than just a product of their environment. **Into**University has helped increase the ambitions and attainment of our students."

And Professor Sarah Speight, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience at the University of Nottingham, recently commented: "By working in partnership with **Into**University, we have more opportunities to inspire children and show them what can result from their hard work and commitment. **Into**University plays such a crucial role in helping to transform the lives of so many local young people... We are delighted to play a part in supporting this great work and we look forward to many more years of partnership to come."

## ► Yafet

"**Into**University exposed me to a whole heap of opportunities, including a scholarship to a boarding school and university trips, which exposed me to new ideas and perspectives, helping me identify and pursue my passion."

In 2015, Yafet was a student at our Leeds East centre, being supported with his ambitions by a mentor from the University of Leeds. Whilst at school, Yafet visited Edinburgh on a residential trip with **Into**University; now, in 2023, he is studying Artificial Intelligence and Computer Science at The University of Edinburgh and mentors Lao, a student who attends our Craigmillar centre.

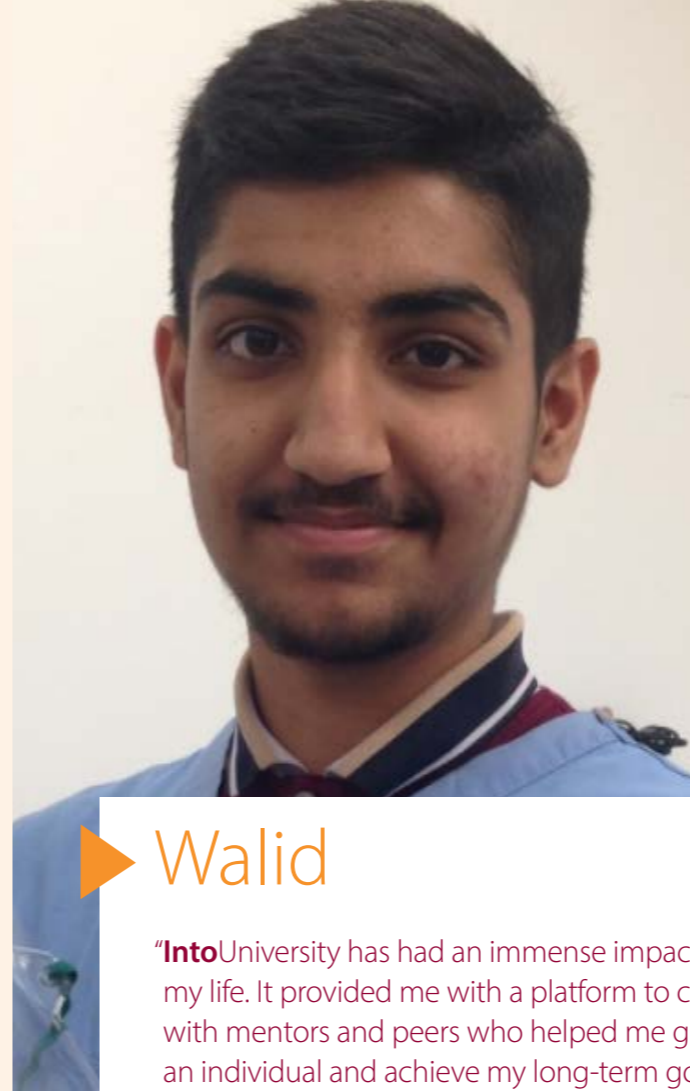
### University visits

Through collaboration with our wonderful university partners, young people going through the **Into**University programme have had the benefit of being able to visit universities, giving them the opportunity to learn more about university, to feel more comfortable in the university environment, and to ultimately make more informed choices about their future and whether university is the place for them.

In total, this has amounted to an amazing

3,200 uni visits,

with 63,515 students attending.



## ► Walid

"**Into**University has had an immense impact on my life. It provided me with a platform to connect with mentors and peers who helped me grow as an individual and achieve my long-term goals. I had the opportunity to engage in a multitude of enriching experiences; without the support and guidance of the wonderful people who have been a part of my **Into**University journey, I would not be where I am today."

Eight years ago, Walid was a student at our East Ham centre, taking part in a Medicine-themed Holiday FOCUS programme during February half-term, dreaming of becoming a doctor. Now, in 2023, he is in his final year studying Medicine at King's College London and well on his way to making that dream a reality. Not only this, two of Walid's sisters have now also achieved a university place studying Medicine.



### Post-school destinations

Since 2002, over 25,000 of the school leavers we have supported have gone onto study at university. This has had a life-changing impact on our young people, as well as their siblings and wider community.

Additionally, over 1,500 of our school leavers have achieved apprenticeship places and

over 2,000 students progressed into full time employment after school.





## ▶ Hebba

"I will forever go on about mentoring - I believe it is one of the most amazing things on earth for young people!"

Hebba and Suzanna met back in 2012 at our North Kensington centre through our Mentoring programme, when Hebba was still at school and Suzanna was studying for her degree in Environmental Science. Now, Hebba, who until recently worked as an Education Worker at **Into**University Brent, is a Community Development Officer and Suzanna is a Climate Change Policy Researcher.

### Volunteering

**Into**University would be nothing without the support of our incredible volunteers. From university students to staff at our corporate partners to members of our local communities, since 2002,

over **15,000** volunteers have given up their time to help our young people achieve.

### Mentoring

A core part of our programme which we've been delighted to offer young people is the opportunity to receive one-to-one mentoring. Through the support of thousands of dedicated university student mentors and corporate mentors, many of our students have been able to build transformative and lasting relationships with mentors which have supplemented other aspects of our programme.

Throughout the last 20 years, there have been:

**52,079** mentoring meetings

**5,398** mentoring pairs

## Insight Into work

Providing students with an insight into different careers and the workplace is essential to our mission. With our corporate partners, we have run a range of programmes where students have the opportunity to experience the world of work, including:

**574**

Business in FOCUS workshops, where Secondary students develop key communication and teamwork skills through an immersive day-long business simulation, usually taking place in a corporate environment.

**301**

Careers in FOCUS workshops, where students learn about the world of work and gain hands-on experience on a variety of potential future careers.

Over **70**

Insight Days designed to introduce students to an organisation, the careers available there and the possible pathways to join.

### Big City, Bright Future

In 2015, 15 of our students took part in an internship at BlackRock UK that would later become our Big City Bright Future internship, an annual three-week paid work experience programme created especially to help school leavers who aspire to work within competitive industries.

In July 2023, 159 young people and 22 globally-recognised partner firms took part and since 2015, a total of 974 of our students have taken part in the internship, helping to accelerate their careers into competitive industries.



Students attending our 2016 Big City Bright Future internship vs students attending our 2023 Big City Bright Future internship.





## The future of technology and social mobility in the UK

**Our corporate partners don't only provide support to our students but also lend their expertise to the charity as a whole. Through pro bono projects and staff mentoring, our partners have been essential in supporting the charity's growth. APCO Worldwide is one of those partners whose perspective on the future of education, technology and the working world is extremely beneficial to our work.**

**Below Richard de Pencier, Associate Director (Strategy and Campaigns) at APCO Worldwide provides his insight into how technological shifts have the opportunity to impact the future of education and social mobility.**

The UK education system is in a state of flux, and with it the future of social mobility. The government is leaning into sectors where the UK leads – in industries such as life sciences, financial services and technology more broadly – through tweaking of the curriculum to resemble the advanced approach to mathematics found in the Far East. Similarly, a focus on Nordic principles of vocational education is seen as vital in preparing students for practical roles in the most equitable way possible, while boosting the UK's productivity.

This focus is vital to social mobility and to countering the perception held by many in disadvantaged communities that new technologies rarely benefit them. This an issue only exacerbated by the pandemic, which shone a light on the issues faced by 22% of the UK population that sit on the wrong side of the digital divide<sup>1</sup>. For many years, private education has moved with technological shifts, while state education remains laggard. Answering digital exclusion in schools, as well as homes, is critical to driving success across the whole UK.

As with all systemic issues, change will require investment and willing across multiple governments to make lasting structural change that is adaptable and can incorporate new technologies in an effective way.

It is an issue that the Secretary of State for Education, Gillian Keegan MP, addressed at the Education World Forum on May 8, highlighting that the UK's productivity crisis is not exclusive to manufacturing, agriculture and other traditionally manual industries<sup>2</sup>. Keegan argued that teachers are now so overburdened by administrative tasks that they lack time to address the responsibilities that parents and the regulator expect – hands-on teaching, thoughtful feedback and issues management. The government's consultation on the usage, opportunities and risks programmes like ChatGPT present for education closes on 23 August 2023<sup>3</sup>.

Where other markets have expressed caution over the implementation of such solutions in the classroom, the Secretary of State was bullish, lauding the potential for generative AI to remove the need for teachers to ever build lesson plans again. It is true that efficiencies made at scale could offer state education the breathing space to address systemic problems that disproportionately impact students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Hours freed up might be more fruitfully focused on helping students that require the greatest support. However, teachers have already highlighted the existential threat posed by AI, if the government's approach is too reckless. As well as the potential for large-scale cheating, experts now worry about "infantilisation" and coddling of students that will, rather than narrowing educational gaps, may diminish a generation's capacity for knowledge acquisition in the first place. Supporting the technology is the first step, however, but investing in its equal rollout, addressing impacts and regulating appropriately will be extremely costly.

The Secretary of State's comments came in addition to a recently published white paper – "AI regulation: a pro-innovation approach"<sup>4</sup> – that establishes the government's goal to use technology to rebalance the economy and build the workforce of the future. The prospect of automating many tasks – particularly in energy, manufacturing and healthcare – is compelling and already a fact within many private companies. Similarly, leveraging AI to monitor emissions, avoid costly human error and reduce overheads can all be seen as positive steps towards responsible growth.

What then, for the millions of workers that generative and narrow AI looks likely to replace over the coming years? Clearly, there is a need for vast public investment in retraining of workforces and redefining what "skilled worker" means in modern Britain. Indeed, the Labour Party's forthcoming position statement will likely highlight that "responsible AI" is not just about reducing the direct risks posed by future artificial general intelligence (AGI), but mitigating harms on real livelihoods caused by the narrow applications that are already available. As is its longstanding commitment, the Labour Party will look to protect jobs from rapid transformation.

The key is not to sustain jobs that will inevitably disappear, rather to ensure that all of society gains access to the resources to evolve. Further embracing of advance technologies, including the use of virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR) in educational settings, could create a sustainable framework for societal transformation. **The prospect of students from all backgrounds receiving tailored educational programmes that harness advanced technologies, based on the needs of the individual, is seen by some as the silver bullet required to truly drive equitable outcomes in schools across the UK and in retraining millions of workers nationwide.**

Dr Neil McDonnell, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Glasgow, and one of the foremost voices researching immersive technologies, speaks passionately of the potential reward in removing physical constraints from educational settings:

*"You can be as big as a mountain or as small as an atom; you can breathe while standing on the moon, handle Ebola virus samples in the lab, or prototype designs for a sports car – all without the danger, injury, or cost that we find in the real world.*

*Like the internet before it, XR technology is at its core liberating, and just like the world wide web we can expect it to create transformative new opportunities for all."*

The impact that this could have on social mobility is clear, with McDonnell arguing that a scaled, virtual education system could help to bridge societal divides:

*"One project I am involved in now aims to use XR technology to let anyone, from anywhere, curate a museum exhibition from some of the most precious and valuable objects on earth.*

*"Anyone, from anywhere, could tell the story of their culture, of their home, of their background using objects to which they would never otherwise have access, let alone be able to bring together in one place for their own ends.*

*"This is just one example of where the removal of physical constraints amounts to the removal of social constraints too, and I think that is one of the great promises of this new technology."*

**For the millions of students without laptops, reliable internet or the physical space to effectively work at home, offering state education access to hardware en masse is intrinsic to this strategy's success, while ensuring that in-person safeguarding and pastoral care remains, as well as less tangible benefits like inspiring young people to aspire.**

The rewards of this blended approach to technology and teaching are being seen in countries outside of the UK. Indeed, some of the most compelling applications of technology can be found in Sweden, where a cultural shift towards lifelong learning is being driven by research institutions investigating virtual training scenarios<sup>5</sup>. In theory, this creates a culture that is resilient to all technological shifts, with governments reaping the rewards of bold policymaking. No wonder that the UK is looking so closely at Northern Europe for inspiration.

Irrespective of who wins the next general election in 2024, it is vital that each side of the House of Commons acknowledges that the widespread rollout of advanced technologies will hugely change our lives, but that pro-innovation regulation can attract investment, boost productivity and retain public trust in communities that feel left behind. For the Labour Party, who many assume to be the next government-in-waiting, embracing technology can provide the UK with the competitive advantage it needs to arrest its decline and drive the kind of social mobility that is its principal cause. Indeed, future policymakers must work with businesses to show that socioeconomic diversity in the workforce, which is directly linked to social mobility, is not forgotten when building a successful corporate ESG agenda<sup>6</sup>.

For APCO Worldwide, our support of companies aiming to positively shape public policy, our progressive leadership and our partnership with **Into**University underpins a commitment to enhancing social mobility. As we celebrate the charity's 20th Anniversary, we look forward to continuing our work with **Into**University to drive positive outcomes for the long-term.

1. University of Cambridge: "Pay the wi-fi or feed the children": Coronavirus has intensified the UK's digital divide", <https://bit.ly/3M7y6Pz>

2. Department of Education, "Education Secretary addresses the Education World Forum", <https://bit.ly/3W3lrAC>

3. Department of Education, "Generative artificial intelligence in education call for evidence", <https://bit.ly/3O5mrB>

4. Department of Science, Innovation and Technology: "AI regulation: a pro-innovation approach", <https://bit.ly/3ObzwLD>

5. Sevelop expertise: our lifelong learning offering", <https://bit.ly/3W82pdS>

6. McKinsey, "Fixing the ladder: How UK businesses benefit from better social mobility", <https://mck.co/3lep3eB>

# The next 20 years – supporting future generations to reach their potential

By John Bleasdale, Director of Development

Social entrepreneurship is all about seizing opportunities to solve social problems. When Rachel and Hugh decided to launch **Into**University 20 years ago, this is exactly what they did. As a result of their ingenuity, and the hard work and support of many incredible people along the way, we have been able to impact the lives of more than 190,000 young people.

I've been fortunate to play a part in this journey, having headed up the **Into**University fundraising team over the past 5 years. Reading through this report, I'm very proud of the tangible and positive change we've been able to achieve for young people across England and Scotland. Having the opportunity to get up each morning and work for an organisation that really makes a positive difference is a privilege we perhaps don't focus on often enough, but throughout this year as we've celebrated our 20th anniversary, it's been a great opportunity to reflect.

In the same spirit of social entrepreneurship that has taken **Into**University so far, we are focused on seizing the next opportunity – to serve a generation who have been left damaged by the pandemic and are further at risk from rising costs, economic hardship and a job market demanding ever greater skills.

With a network of centres in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and many more centres in the pipeline, we are uniquely placed to respond to these needs. We're mindful that we will need to stay agile and continue to adapt to a new set of opportunities and challenges presented by the world, as we support our young people to navigate through their academic journey over the next 20 years and beyond.



## The growing need

In the challenging neighbourhoods where we work, typically 40% of children will grow up in significant poverty. Homes are often overcrowded spaces where young people have nowhere to study, and where devices are shared between siblings. At age 16 many will be two years behind their peers in learning. As few as one in ten will progress to university.

As a result, many families are caught in a vicious cycle, where the disadvantages of one generation are passed onto the next. This creates neighbourhoods where, for decades, poverty and educational underachievement have gone hand in hand.

The pandemic and the cost of living crisis are now making life even tougher. COVID has set back educational progress, the poverty crisis is deepening, and children's mental health cases are increasing alarmingly.

The hill to be climbed is even steeper than before and the work of **Into**University's centres is more vital than ever.

## The journey to a million

Whilst our primary aim is to help young people achieve positive post-school outcomes, regardless of whether they choose to apply to university or not, we know that as increased pressures exacerbate educational inequalities, demand for higher education (HE) is set to become even more competitive. The "journey to a million" has been a hot topic in the sector for some time, and UCAS recently reaffirmed its projection that we are likely to see a million students applying to universities by the end of the decade. This is largely driven by an increasing 18-year-old population, which, according to the ONS, could rise to nearly 900,000 by 2030, representing an increase of 200,000 from the beginning of this decade.

While this is a positive reflection of the perception of HE among students, questions remain about the practical implications of increasing provision, and the impact it could have on student experience. For those of us with a stake in tackling educational inequalities, there are concerns about how this sizable increase in demand could affect efforts to level the playing field for young people from less advantaged backgrounds.

In the coming years, this context will be an increasingly important consideration for us as an organisation. We'll be working with our network of university partners to ensure that our young people get the support and information they need to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by the shifting HE landscape.

## New industries, new opportunities

While we're mindful of the challenges ahead and the need they create for an expansion of our work, we're also excited about the opportunities the future presents for the young people we work with.

Over the next few years we expect to see significant growth in a number of industries. From digital technologies to green jobs and advanced manufacturing, the young people we start working with today will potentially end up doing jobs that don't even exist yet. Over recent years, we've seen the emergence of disciplines such as ESG and D&I create new roles and areas of focus, and we expect these opportunities to continue to grow going forward. What's more, the shift to increased remote and flexible working post-pandemic seems to have had a lasting effect on many industries and organisations, opening up jobs to a wider pool of candidates across the whole geographic spread, rather than relying on local talent.

The long-term implications of this on the job market remain to be seen, but could potentially create a much more diverse range of opportunities for students across the entirety of our network, without the need to relocate.

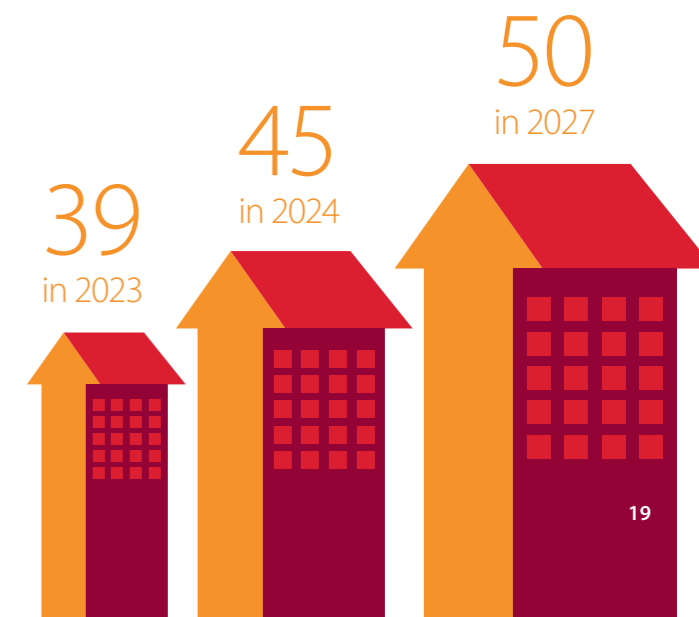
A key part of our development strategy will be to establish and grow relationships with corporate partners from a wider range of sectors, encompassing some of these newly emerging industries, so we can provide our students with information, access and experiential opportunities that expose them to the full spectrum of possibilities.

## Expanding our impact

While we will always adapt our approach to the needs of the day, we still feel strongly that our existing model of place-based support is key. We know there are so many young people who currently need this support but are unable to access it. Our main strategic priority therefore is to expand the impact of our work, with the aim of supporting over 500,000 young people by 2040, with **Into**University embedded as a long-term presence in the most deprived communities in the UK.

We are very proud of the long-standing partnerships we have with our university, corporate and philanthropic partners, to sustain the work of the charity. With your support, and the same shared tenacity and drive that has defined the last 20 years at **Into**University, I believe we can achieve this and more for young people in the years to come.

By 2027, we are aiming to operate 50 learning centres across the UK, serving thousands more young people and communities in need. At this scale we aim to be supporting at least 60,000 young people across our network each year.



## Join us on the next stage of our journey



As we look forward to the next stage of our journey, there is a number of ways you can help us achieve our next goal of reaching 50 centres across England and Scotland:

- ▶ Acting as an ambassador and advocate for **IntoUniversity** wherever you go.
- ▶ Volunteering time or expertise – email us at **volunteering@intouniversity.org** to find out more about how you can help.
- ▶ Donating the crucial funds we need to carry on supporting our young people by making a gift.

If you would like to talk to someone about how your gift can help, please call our fundraising team on 020 7243 0242.

However you can help, 'your support matters' – huge thanks to you for helping us to reach 20 years; we are looking forward to continuing the **IntoUniversity** journey with you.



## Acknowledgements

There are simply too many individuals and organisations who have made the **IntoUniversity** journey possible over the past 20 years, that it would be impossible to mention you all individually. Needless to say, we are so grateful to all of the funders who have provided the much-needed financial support, without which we wouldn't be able to operate. We've been blessed to receive support from so many incredibly generous individual donors, businesses, universities, trusts and foundations, and we are truly thankful to each and everyone of you. A huge thank you also to the thousands of amazing volunteers who have dedicated their time, energy and expertise to the charity over the years. Our work relies on building strong ties with partner organisations, including schools, local community groups, universities and businesses. Thank you to everyone we've worked with - you play such a crucial role in delivering the **IntoUniversity** programme. To all our staff past and present, we are so lucky to have been able to rely on so many incredible, talented, hardworking and passionate people throughout the 20 years - without you, none of this is possible. Thank you so much for all your tireless contributions and support of our young people. Lastly, and most importantly, a huge and heartfelt thank you goes to every single young person we've had the joy of welcoming into an **IntoUniversity** centre over the past 20 years. It's been such a privilege being able to work with you all and seeing you develop and go on to do amazing things. We're looking forward to continuing to work with you in the years to come.