

Unite Foundation scholarship expansion scheme

Supporting more estranged and care experienced students with a free #HomeAtUniversity

Summary

Having somewhere to call home matters. For the past 10 years the Unite Foundation has provided a unique scholarship scheme for estranged and care experienced young people that covers their student rent for up to 3 years. Independent research from [Jisc](#) provides strong evidence that the Unite Foundation scholarship model improves educational outcomes, specifically in year-to-year progression, completion and degree classification. Our scholarship student outcomes over that decade were close to, or on a par with, non-care leaver students across these key access and participation metrics.

The Unite Foundation strategy (2021-26) announced our ambition to significantly expand the number of accommodation scholarships for students who are estranged or from care. We are committed to building the evidence base that the costs of university accommodation provision are outweighed by the transformative, academic, and financial value of these students staying on course and completing their studies. In doing so, we'll be testing the business case for HE providers to offer a home at university as standard.

Opportunity

Unite Foundation & our funding partner – a charitable foundation ('the Donors'), are looking for university partners interested in advancing care leaver and estranged student outcomes through accommodation scholarships.

This is a match funding opportunity with the Donors providing 2/3rds of scholarship tenancy costs and selected University partners will provide the remaining 1/3rd of that cost, in cash or in kind, to ensure the student experiences a rent-free home at university.

You will be expected to deliver 52 week accommodation scholarships to a single cohort of estranged or care experienced students, for a maximum of 3 academic years per student. In addition, the Unite Foundation will provide full administration of the scholarship scheme, offering a central contact point on evaluation practice as well as for applicant and awarded students.

Funding Parameters

The overall programme seeks to engage at least 1 or 2 universities (existing partners or new to the Unite Foundation) to deliver 6-10 accommodation scholarships across the UK.. Mindful of rental income across different geographic locations there is the opportunity to reflect differing costs within your application to share the minimum and maximum number of scholarships you'd like to support. We welcome applications from individual institutions or existing partnerships (eg Uni Connect or networking group).

Minimum eligibility

For consideration as a partner under this programme you must:

- + be a UK registered university
- + own and manage accommodation with modern facilities (eg ensuite and accessible room options, wifi)
- + offer funding annually, over 3 years, representing 1/3rd of a 52 week tenancy rental cost, per student.

Timeline

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| + 23 rd October | Call opens for university partners |
| + 20 th November, midnight | Call closes |
| + 23 rd November | Call application outcomes confirmed |
| + 15 th December | Scheme administration finalised with university partners |
| + 1 st January '24 | Scholarship scheme opens for student applications |
| + 14 th June '24 | Scholarship scheme closes for student applications |
| + 4 th July '24 | Application outcomes confirmed for students |
| + September/October '24 | Intake of cohort for 24/25 academic year |

Criteria for partnership selection

Applications will be prioritised that can best demonstrate:

- + senior level alignment with the Unite Foundation strategic intent described in the summary
- + capacity to capture, monitor and evaluate outcomes for care experienced and estranged students
- + an holistic approach to student support through active interdepartmental working and collaboration with 3rd parties (including appropriate data sharing.)

Application process

Application is [online](#) with questions based on the above criteria and informed by the standards of practice indicators within the [Stand Alone Pledge](#) (estranged students) and the [NNECL Quality Mark](#) (care experienced students).

The application will ask for:

- + personal contact and organisational details
- + a letter from an internal sponsor with senior level remit for widening access and participation
- + a statement of evaluation practice and student support for care leaver and estranged students
- + budgetary information on cost of accommodation and financial contribution proposed

Deadline for responses is 20th November, midnight

General information online sessions will be available for questions:

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| + Tuesday 31 st October | 12 – 1pm |
| + Thursday 9 th November | 3 – 4pm |

To book onto either of these events, or for additional information please contact us on

info@unitefoundation.org.uk