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The Students’ Association is continuously developing and improving the support available to our Societies and Social Enterprise groups, as well as the opportunities provided by the Volunteering Service. Over the past year, our Activities department has provided training, recognition, drop-in sessions and funding opportunities, allowing our Societies to organise over 4180 events. With nearly 300 Societies and 12 Social Enterprise projects, there is something for everyone. Yet, our students’ creativity and enthusiasm always brings up new opportunities; this year, we supported students through the creation of 29 brand new Societies! In addition to the amazing events organised by our Societies, our student-led volunteering projects have clocked up a massive 11,689 hours of volunteering in less than one year! We also encouraged students to deliver businesses in a way that benefits the local community, wider society and the environment through a pilot Social Enterprise service, run in partnership with LAUNCH.ed (Edinburgh Innovations). In light of all the amazing work that our students put into Societies, Volunteering and Social Enterprise projects, we continued to recognise their achievements through the Activities Awards, Edinburgh Award, and digital Spotlight on articles. This past year, the Activities Team focused on expanding and improving the services they offer to students through volunteering, Societies & Social Enterprise projects. As the Vice President Activities & Services for the 2018-19 term, I am looking forward to joining them in this effort! I’m especially keen on encouraging more involvement and helping our groups flourish. The implementation of a Participation Officer scheme aims to make activities more inclusive and diversifying the membership composition of our student groups. I am also very excited about encouraging our Societies to engage, collaborate and support each other through a number of events that we have lined up, including the introduction of a new “Sport Vs Societies” event at Potterrow. Over the next year, I cannot wait to work with such a great team and so many fantastic student groups, helping them make the most of what our Activities department has to offer. Do not hesitate to contact me at VPActivities@eusa.ed.ac.uk if there is anything I can do to help!
22K+ Number of students engaged in Societies

£19,834 Funds awarded

11,689 Number of hours volunteered this year through our Volunteering Service

4,180 Number of events organised by Societies

86 Edinburgh Award Recipients

1,972 Officer Bearers with HEAR recognition
Review of the Year

Mission Statement
We support Societies through advice, funding, and services. We are here to help Societies and their Office Bearers be the best they can be and to help extend the scope of what they can achieve.

We do this in several ways:

Development, Training, and Recognition:
- Welcome Training for Office Bearers
- Society Drop-ins
- Annual Reports
- Edinburgh Award for Office Bearers
- Office Bearer Networking Events
- New Societies Training Events
- HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Report)
- Activities Awards

Funding to support events, activities, and development:
- Development Fund
- Volunteering Impact Fund
- Access to other Students’ Association funding (e.g. Global Fund, Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund)

Banking Service:
- BACS transfers or cheques requests by Societies, both online and in office
- Bank statement requests
- Depositing cash in their Societies’ accounts

Advice and support:
- Event Management
- Fundraising
- Effective Society management – including managing finance, risk, Society development, growing membership
- Connecting and collaborating with other Societies and student groups
- Mediation and conflict resolution, with referral to other specialist support through the Advice Place, where necessary

Activity Support across the Students’ Association
- Advertising on Students’ Association screens
- Providing space for Society posters
- Room bookings and block booking per semester
- Events support – planning and delivery, including access to box office/ticketing facilities
- Give it a Go week to showcase and grow Societies in collaboration with our Marketing and Events Teams
- Opportunities to contribute to other festivals/events including Global Students Day, Sexcetera, Mental Health and Wellbeing Week
- Activities Fair in Welcome Week in September and Give It a Go week in January
Our Year in Numbers

- 277 Societies
- 2,214 Committee Members
- 120 scheduled face-to-face meetings with Societies, with around 140 more ad hoc meetings throughout the year
- 27,974 Membership
  - Students: 26,363
  - Non-Students: 1,610
Over the course of the year, our Activities Executive has received applications for 54 new Society proposals. In 2017-18, 29 new Societies were created:

- Armenian Society
- Biochemistry Society
- Community Building for Ecological and Environmental Sciences (Community BEES)
- Dignity in Dying
- DragSoc
- Edinburgh Mercy Corps Student Corps
- Edinburgh Music Outreach Society
- Edinburgh University Science Media (EUSci)
- Electronics and Electrical Engineering Society
- Filipinos Society of Edinburgh University (PinoySoc)
- Friends of Nightline
- Friends of the Postcard Association
- Girl Up Edinburgh Campus
- General Practice Society
- Hummus Society
- Ice Skating Society (iSkateSoc)
- InterSci
- Irish Society
- Magic Society
- Mary’s Meals Edinburgh
- Medical Ethics and Humanities Society
- New College Society
- Obstetrics and Gynaecology Society
- Pathology Society
- Remote and Rural Medicine Society
- Science Journals Society
- Stem Cell and Cancer Research Society
- Third Culture Society
- Trauma and Orthopaedics Society

This report is based on figures of 277 Annual Reports. In reality, the Societies Team supported 301 Societies throughout 2017-18.
Financials

Societies’ expenditure accumulated to £1,073,006.27

Societies generated a combined total of £1,191,903.52

£117,310 was deposited via our office to Society accounts throughout the academic year.

Between September 2017 and May 2018, over 1400 individual BACS requests totalling £620,439.00 were processed for Societies and Social Enterprises.

68 Societies are sent monthly transaction lists of their Society banking account. Separately, another 1,076 transaction lists were distributed to Societies from individual requests through our office/email.

Society Financial Reporting

Each year, our Societies submit financial reports covering their financial activity. This incorporates money raised from numerous sources, such as fundraising, membership sales, ticket sales for events, sponsorship, cost of assets, etc. It also covers costs incurred for their activities, such as venue hire, material costs, events costs, purchase of equipment, etc.

From these reports, we have gleaned the following information:

Activities Development Fund

The Activities Executive awarded £13,729.99 to 36 Societies from the Development Fund in 2017/18. Here are some examples of the types of projects that they funded:

Technical Equipment: £2,702.29
HYPED: £1000 to purchase a 3D printer is creating a prototype Hyperloop pod to compete in the SpaceX competition in August 2018 - a student competition where teams build pods to reach the highest possible speed and prove the feasibility of the technology. The 3D printer will be used by the technical team for in-house manufacturing and prototyping, improving lead times for components and reducing costs.

Women in STEM Society: £500 in support of Edinburgh’s first tech conference for women, created to inspire young females to pursue tech careers. The project aimed to provide a platform for students and researchers to network with the tech industry, to give insight to the industry in a manner that provides female models, inspiring females to step in, and normalising women leadership in STEM industry.

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Events £4,870

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Musical Instruments and Equipment £2,877

Revelation Rock-Gospel Choir: £1000 to replace a broken drum kit, enabling the choir to continue having a band and allowing members of all backgrounds to have equal opportunities to learn new skills within the band.

Instructors or External Speakers £1,100

MedAID for International Need: £500 towards the implementation of a clinical seminars series to engage students in the importance of collecting and distributing unwanted medical equipment globally, making surgery safe and available everywhere.

Skills Development £800

Sign Language Society: £600 to support the enrolment of some Society members on accredited British Sign Language (BSL) courses, taught by Edinburgh Charity DeafAction, so that they would then be able to effectively share knowledge of BSL within the Society as well as the group’s local outreach projects.

Other Materials £1,100.70

Makeup and SFX Society: £418 to start up their collection of makeup and special effects materials to be used for workshops and to help facilitating collaborations with other Societies, such as theatre groups.
Office Bearer Training

For the second year, we have relied on an online training system through the Learn platform, we designed one area which contained specific trainings for the President, Secretary and Treasurer alongside the general training for all other Office Bearers. Using the adaptive release tool, each office bearer saw the content that was relevant to their roles. We also created a refresher course for students who have been an office bearer before.

Societies Office Bearer Training

Over 1,400 students successfully completed the Societies office bearer training.

Feedback

Overall, 492 students completed the training feedback survey.

Positive Comments:

▲ The training had improved from 2016/17, particularly in relation to the re-vamped format and the fact that it was more concise. It was a good introduction to their role and left them feeling sufficiently prepared for the upcoming academic year

▲ The Refresher training course, which was a new addition this year, was useful

▲ The use of videos was helpful

Room for Improvement

▲ Content – some respondents felt that…
  ■ The training required more depth and could include more detailed information about certain roles, e.g. room bookings, the Activities Fair, AGMs and constitutions
  ■ There could be clearer demarcation of the responsibilities for each Office Bearer, particular in relation to Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers
  ■ The training did not completely reflect the experiences of a broad range of Societies
  ■ Some quizzes were overly simple

▲ Format – Some respondents felt that…
  ■ The training could be shorter and more videos could be used

▲ Accessibility – Some respondents felt that…
  ■ The training is unsuitable for those with dyslexia or limited vision. The font used on slides could be larger and that the text appeared blurry when displayed on laptop screens. There were some general spelling mistakes

Suggestions

▲ The Students’ Association should provide an online platform where students could access any forms they might need

▲ A booklet-style copy of the training should be produced and made available for future consultation

▲ A list of important dates and contact details would be helpful

▲ Some examples of other Societies’ achievements would be helpful

▲ In-person training, alongside online training, would be useful

▲ The opportunity to meet other students undertaking similar committee roles would be beneficial

What we did to improve:

▲ An online platform allowing easy access to forms has been created on the Students’ Association website

▲ An information booklet – the Office Bearer’s Guide – has been created and published

▲ The Activities Team have hosted weekly networking events this semester, to allow students to meet committee members of other Societies
Annual Reports

This is the third year we have used annual reports to track the activity of our Societies, which has allowed us to further develop accountability within office bearer roles. Societies were also given the opportunity to shout about their achievements throughout this academic year.

Societies’ Activities:

150 Societies meet weekly and many hold multiple events every week. Most Societies held at least 5 events per semester.

Based on this, our Societies have held at least 4180 events this year and the true figure is likely to be significantly higher than this.

Over 50 Societies have reported on doing volunteering projects, giving back to the local community, and engaging with external partners.

Over 140 Societies have engaged in some form of fundraising activity, with 83 Society donating the money collected to external charities. According to the numbers provided by 35 Societies, our Societies fundraised in excess of £27,340 for charity.
Here are some examples of exciting things that our societies are getting up to:

**Academic**

**Society of Immunology and Infectious Diseases** organized a ‘themed’ sexually transmitted infections (STI) day where we raised awareness about STIs at the university, distributed free condoms and information about services in the city. The Society also organized a lecture on STIs and a pub quiz.

**Advice & Community**

**Sexpension** hosted the 2017 Sexpension: UK National Conference, which was attended by over 100 people.

**Appreciation**

**Vegetarian and Vegan Society** organised a Welcome Week event with Stefanie Moir, a vegan bodybuilder and YouTuber.

**Artistic and Creative**

**Art Soc** hosted a panel discussion with the women who run Tabloid Art History, a Twitter and Instagram account with over 60,000 followers. This event was very well attended and captivated its audience.

**Campaigning & Awareness**

**People and Planet** ran a successful divestment campaign this year. Through their sustained campaigning, they were able to lobby the University to fully divested from the fossil fuel industry in February 2018.

**Dance, Music & Theatre**

**Music Society** held their 150th Anniversary Concert, which was an incredible achievement. This had been 10 years in the planning and was held in the Usher Hall with a large audience.

**Employment, Transferable Skills & Finance**

**Business Society** and **Entrepreneurs Society** held the Start Ed conference in February which was a collaborative project between the two societies. There were 38 guest speakers invited and over 80 students in attendance.

**Faith, Belief & Spiritual Development**

**Buddhist Society** held a pilot “Dharma Lecture Series” in which two Mahayana Buddhist Nuns from Larung Gar Monastery in Sichuan Province, China were invited to give three talks encapsulating different key teachings in Buddhism.

**Gaming & Roleplaying**

**What? Where? When?** will be representing Scotland with an impressive 2 teams in the UK National championship.

**International & Multicultural**

**Chinese Students and Scholars Association** provided an airport pick-up service for more than 900 new students over the summer period and into Welcome Week. This was for language course students who were in Edinburgh for either 4, 7, or 10 week programmes, as well as students who were arriving for their full year courses starting in September.

**Media and Broadcasting**

**FreshAir.org.uk** organized the first ever Media Ball in collaboration with other media Societies as well as being awarded by the Student Radio Association for their Sports Show and winning Best Student Radio Station 2017 – Scotland in the TMT Magazine Media Awards.

**Physical and Outdoors**

**Yoga Society** increased their weekly class offerings – going from 6 regular classes a week and ad-hoc workshops, to an incredible 16 a week this year as well as many more workshops.

**Political**

**Labour Students** supported the striking lecturers through letter writing to key university figures, worked on building their affordable housing campaign and managed to raise £100 for Edinburgh Rape Crisis.

**Volunteering**

**Edinburgh Archaeology Outreach Project** ran an event unlike anything else that EAOP has tried before. They put on an archaeology family fun day at Summerhall for families in the area. It was a huge success with over 240 people attending, including the families of some of the archaeology department staff.
HEAR

Once again, this year we used committee members’ annual reports to certify that only those who were actively engaged in their Society were recognised on the HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Record), ensuring the value of HEAR is maintained.

Edinburgh Award 2017-18

Edinburgh Award for Society Office Bearers:

▲ 221 Office Bearers registered for the Award
• This number dropped slightly from last year (2016-17: 297) as we changed the sign up process. The award was open to Office Bearers who had successfully completed their online training

▲ 86 Office Bearers completed the Award
• This number dropped proportionately with the sign up numbers (2016-17: 115)

▲ A range of training and leadership skills sessions were offered to students from external professionals:
• Money Management
• Professional Networking & Communications
• Project Management
• Running Efficient Meetings
• Marketing and Promotion
• Building Confidence and Assertiveness
• Problem Solving and Decision Making
• Public Speaking

▲ The UoE Careers Service also delivered CV and Interview Skills sessions to participants

▲ The Office Bearers who completed the award attended a minimum of 4 sessions

▲ 11 Office Bearers went above and beyond the requirement attended 5 or more training sessions

▲ There was a total of 427 attendances at the training sessions throughout the year

▲ Feedback was sought for each stage of the award programme – training sessions, inputs, communications and the way the programme runs

▲ Improvements will be made based on feedback from this year for the 2018-19 award

General Feedback

Input 3: “Learning about competency based questions and practicing them is very helpful.”

Running Efficient Meetings: “This was the best session. The speaker was really engaging and gave us some really useful quotes for meetings.”

Public Speaking: “The session was both engaging and entertaining and tailored to the office bearer role.”

Areas for improvement

▲ Office Bearers would like more information about what exactly it is that they are signing up to and what kind of commitment the award programme is. A handbook will be created which outlines the deadlines, timelines and key information about the award and associated training sessions

▲ Students commented on difficulty of finding information in emails about upcoming deadlines. Using LEARN as a central platform for having all the crucial information in one place helps to combat this and so LEARN will be used more next year

▲ Office Bearers questioned the extra deadlines and how they related to the award scheme specifically. The task for Input 2 and 3 will be reconsidered to ensure that students are gaining and developing their skills throughout the whole award programme
Activities Awards

On Monday 26 March, Societies, student groups, staff and guests came together at the Assembly Rooms to celebrate the achievements of Societies and student groups over the last year. The event included live performances from Bhangra, A Cappella, DrumsoC and Footlights and was attended by over 500 people.

This year’s Awards included Societies, Volunteering groups and Social Enterprises in order to represent the rich variety of interests and work contributed to the greater community by students under the Activities umbrella.

We set a target goal of 480 nominations, which we exceeded with 893 nominations across the Award categories.

We offered 16 Award categories, and the winners were:

▲ Star Volunteer: Phoebe Jones – Project Sanitree, Enactus
▲ Society Star: Paul Sinclair – Folk Society
▲ Committee Member of the Year: Danielle Hall – FreshAir
▲ Best Group Event: South Asian Students’ Association – Diwali 2017
▲ Most Welcoming Group: Swing Dance Society
▲ Best Newcomer Societies: Blood, Bone Marrow and Transplant Society
▲ Volunteering Project of the Year: Dirty Weekenders Conservation Volunteers
▲ Social Enterprise Project of the Year: Project Sanitree - Enactus
▲ The ESCA Award: Star Fundraiser Greg Bunting – RAG
▲ Student Group of the Year – Academic: History Society
▲ Student Group of the Year – Arts & Performance: Bhangra Crew
▲ Student Group of the Year – Community & Campaigning: Sexpression
▲ Student Group of the Year – Interest & Appreciation: Murder Mystery Society
▲ Student Group of the Year – International, Faith, and Multicultural: Latin American Society
▲ Student Group of the Year – Politics, Skills & Finance: Debates Union
▲ Student Group of the Year – Volunteering Groups: Dirty Weekenders Conservation Volunteers

Additionally, the honorary Edinburgh University Students’ Association Outstanding Contribution Award was awarded to Morven Bell for her dedication to Wind Band.
Testimonials

Activities Fair

“The Activities Fair is a unique event; bringing together the incredibly diverse range of Societies in the Students’ Association. The bustling environment encourages new students to approach a number of Societies they may not have initially considered.”

– Debates Union

“The Activities fair was a very useful and fun experience as we got to interact with a diverse group of students from all over the university. As a Society from an isolated satellite campus, we rarely gain an opportunity for such interactions. We also gained non-Easter Bush students signed-up to the mailing list during the fair.”

– Easter Bush Academy

Give it a go!

“Everything went very smoothly and according to plan. The atmosphere was very welcoming and friendly and we were very happy with how much interest we got as well as how positive everyone seemed about it. The Students' Association themselves were very organised and supportive and made sure the Fair ran smoothly and efficiently.”

– Northern Society

“There is a sense of pride in hosting a stall of your own! The notion of 'third culture kids' was recognisable so people approached our stall which was great. We were also placed nearby other activities stalls so in the future if this is to happen again then we will be sure to use that opportunity to speak with neighbouring stalls to discuss collaborations for future events.”

– Third Culture Society

Welcome Week Events

“At the end of the Welcome Week we had our Welcome back event. It was a good follow-up after the Activities fair, which allowed new and old members to meet and chat. Many students from other universities that attended the Welcome Back event joined and participated in events during the year. Due to the wide interest in the traditional Bulgarian dances that we presented during the Activities fair, we had many people attending our first Bulgarian dance workshop during the first week of first semester. We would propose to the next committee that they invest more in promoting such an event through Edinburgh University Students’ Association.”

– Bulgarian Society

“Our event was a taster swing dance class aimed at absolute beginners. Our experience running it was very positive: we had about 100 attendees, many of whom completely new to dancing. We believe that our taster class during welcome week contributes significantly to the high attendance of our regular classes during the semester.”

– Swing Dance Society
Training and Development

“It’s good that the activities team run an Edinburgh award to allow people to develop their skills and reflect on experiences whilst on committee.”

– Wind Band

“We enjoyed the new Society and risk assessment training we received, we found this useful as a new Society in terms of learning the basic things we needed to know.”

– Remote and Rural Medicine

“There is god and structured guidance on roles and online training to ensure all committee members have access to support for their role. We appreciated the provision of the Edinburgh Award for members of the executive committee and ability to take part in workshops aimed at developing leadership skills.”

– Student Surgical Society

Facilities and technical support

“The Activities office was helpful whenever we go in and ask for help, especially when they were helping us with storing with the letters. When we ask for transaction list, they are usually supplied to us very efficiently. The BACS system provided to us is very beneficial for us and made our lives a lot easier.”

– TEDxUniversityofEdinburgh

“The regular email communication with Office Bearers makes it infinitely easier to stay on top of Society deadlines. The information for Office Bearers available on Edinburgh University Students’ Association makes everything a lot more manageable and it’s good that everything you need is in one place.”

– Art Soc

“We are pleased with opportunities for advertising, such as using the What’s on page, screens and the Activities fairs.”

– SynBio Society

General support

“The Drop-In sessions are really helpful. I really appreciate Dan and Sarah spending their Friday Afternoons to give committee members an opportunity to discuss any issues and assistance they need.”

– Chocolate Society

“The knowledge the Activities Office has is a fantastic resource. Since they have a good handle on many Society activities they were able to provide solutions for us if we were in a bind or were able to help us by telling us what other Societies have done to get around a similar hurdle.”

– Graduate Law Society

“The personal meetings we received for aid were exemplary. We had close attention on our internal issues, and it was handled very helpfully and intelligently. I was very impressed and satisfied with the work the Activities Office did for and with us!”

– Bedlam Theatre
Future Developments

- Implementing two new online platforms to give Societies more control of their finances and members. The MSL finance module will create an interface almost like online banking where Societies can view their balances and set up different bank branches for different projects and budgets. Our MSL membership module will allow Societies to upload their members themselves onto MSL to make better use of their Society profile for ticket sales, events, communication etc.
- Developing our content areas on LEARN and within the Office Bearer Resources section of the website
- Recruiting a group of volunteers to assist the Activities Executive in assessing Society proposal and funding applications
- Working with Society Office Bearers to help make improvements to the constitution template
- Streamlining our risk assessment templates and the guidance alongside it to ensure that it is understandable and accessible
- Rebranding our Networking Socials to Meet and Greets to appeal more to students looking to get to know other Societies and Office Bearers
- Continue working to develop our New Office Bearers Meet and Greet, which was piloted this March, to get to know some of our Office Bearers before the summer vacation
- Continue to develop the Activities Lounge at Pleasance as an inviting and comfortable space for Office Bearers to use throughout the semester
- Streamlining our storage solutions for Societies. This year we have secured an allocated space at Pleasance during the Festival for Societies to use
- Developing a Participation Officer scheme to continue tackling the barriers to participation on campus, whilst also promoting inclusivity and diversity
- Working to develop the Activities Fair at Pleasance to be more accessible
- Working with the Sabbatical Officers to launch our first ever KB Activities Fair at the beginning of Semester One
- Developing our Welcome Social for Office Bearers to make it more interactive and so that Office Bearers can learn and take something away from it. This year we will have training sessions incorporated before the networking and food
- Working to help encourage Society events and their promotion through developing the Promote Your Group form
- Supporting FreshAir radio station to redevelop their studios at the Pleasance
- Working in collaboration with our Peer Learning and Support team to develop a leadership programme for our Office Bearers
Mission statement
The Volunteering Service helps students enhance their university experience by connecting them with the local community as well as UK-based volunteering opportunities with Third Sector organisations, primarily by engaging students in rewarding volunteering opportunities. The Service offers an online volunteering brokerage, student-led volunteering societies, organises events, as well as advice, resources, funding, awards and recognition to students.

11 Volunteering Societies, Groups and Projects

Projects: 42

- Conservation: 12
- Culture & heritage: 14
- Disability: 4
- Education: 1
- Events & festivals: 5
- Music & Film: 2
- Older people: 2
- Other: 1

11,689 Number of hours volunteered this year
Total volunteers: 913

- Total male: 221
- Total female: 526
- Unspecified gender: 166
- Unspecified degree status: 157
- Non-students: 16
- Postgraduate: 125
- Undergraduate: 615

Hours volunteered: 11,689

Partner organisations: 51

Beneficiaries: 2,550

- Female: 1,402
- Male: 1,022
- Unspecified gender: 126
- Disabilities: 10

Total Spend of Volunteering Societies: £9,593.08
Projects carried out in 45 areas across Edinburgh and Scotland

Here are some examples of exciting things that our Volunteering Societies are getting up to:

▲ Arts & Heritage Volunteer Group – connecting students to sector opportunities. Held a workshop about how to shape up a CV for the sector, a careers fair with the University's Careers Service, helped facilitate an event for 'Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobites' at the National Museum of Scotland

▲ Best Buddies – social club for adults with learning disabilities. Provided a weekly social club to connect students with adults with learning disabilities from the wider community

▲ Children’s Holiday Venture (CHV) – activities for disadvantaged local children. Held regular CHV night outs, Kids Camp and day trips for children have fun and make new friends

▲ Dirty Weekender Conservation Volunteers – practical conservation work. Cleared a section Figgate park in preparation of planting a fruit border, removed Salmonberry from Costorphine Hill, improved the pond at Blairgowie, helped develop a community garden in Duddingston

▲ Edinburgh Archaeological Outreach Project (EAOP) – bringing archaeology to children. Attended 4 primary school classes in Leith to do a short talk on archaeology and facilitate 3 activities, including looking at ancient animal bones and sites

▲ Foreign Language Outreach (FLO) – early learning of French and Spanish. 7 students facilitated teaching French or Spanish to children in primary schools in and around Edinburgh

▲ Lloyds Scholars – 56 students took on varied activities in the community

▲ Mandarin Language Project – learning of Mandarin language and culture. Facilitated teaching Mandarin to children in primary schools in East Lothian and Midlothian

▲ NEW! Edinburgh Music Outreach Society – connecting music students to local hospitals and care homes. Facilitated bi-weekly visits to Liberton Hospital to provide music for patients

▲ Patient Outreach Project (POP) – interacting with elderly patients. Visited patients on a regular basis and engaged with volunteers

▲ Teddy Bear Hospital – teaching children about health and healthcare. Educated children about health, the importance of physical activity and staying safe, through a variety of fun activities

48% Projects for Children
21% Projects for Youth
3% Projects for Vulnerable Adults
7% Projects for Elderly
21% Projects for General Public
Volunteering Hub

In 2016 we launched the online volunteering system which acts as a brokerage between Third Sector organisations and students, where students can search and apply for volunteering roles. It functions as a platform for students to capture their volunteering experience and achievements, including: activities, hours, skills obtained and awards gained. These tools support CV building for employability, encouraging long term thinking for post-university life. The system has been renamed Volunteering Hub to provide transparency.

615 NEW volunteers 1,831 Total volunteers

92 NEW Organisations 254 Total organisations

906 Applications made 142 Opportunities

Volunteering Impact Fund

£3,904 Given out from the Volunteering Impact Fund

Projects funded:

The Dirty Weekenders Conservation Volunteers received £500 and travelled to Davie Park in Blairgowrie, Perthshire, to help with park maintenance including the removal of pondweed to increase biodiversity.

The Dirty Weekenders Conservation Volunteers received £228 and helped remove litter from Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park.

The Dirty Weekenders Conservation Volunteers received £640 and travelled to Fort William to work on path maintenance, habitat management and tree planting in Glen Nevis.

Best Buddies Edinburgh received £250 and organised a Christmas meal to bridge gaps, combat loneliness and create social cohesion for those in the community with learning disabilities.

Edinburgh Archaeological Outreach Project (EAOP) received £500 and attended 4 primary school classes in Leith to do a short talk on archaeology and facilitate 3 activities, including looking at ancient animal bones and sites.

Edinburgh University Mental Health and Wellbeing Society received £500 and organised a Mental Health First Aid course to tackle issues in the student community.

Student group, Cooking for Health received £222 and taught cooking skills and basic nutrition to elderly and isolated individuals.

Edinburgh University Classics Society received £424 and put on an event for two local schools, introducing primary school students to Classics and Ancient History and building awareness.

Edinburgh Music Outreach Society received £235.79 and organised visits to Liberton hospital by student musicians.

Lloyds Scholars received £315.40 to cover volunteer travel costs.

Mandarin Language Project received £20 to put on a social event for volunteers.

Foreign Language Outreach received £48 to cover travel costs of their volunteers.

Training

For the first time, the Volunteering Service ran a skills training course open to any student who uses the Service. The course, Building Confidence and Assertiveness, was chosen based on demand from students to improve this skill. 9 students attended.

Tips from the training are applicable to daily life and specific situations
Edinburgh Award for Volunteering

This year, we expanded the Award from one to three intakes. The purpose was to provide an opportunity for students who either missed out enrolling in October, or for those who arrive in January to study for one semester and for students who undertake UK summer volunteering to work towards recognition.

▲ Intake 1 (October – March)
△ 97 students registered. This number dropped from last year (2016-17: 169)
△ 25 students completed the Award. This number dropped slightly from last year (2016-17: 29)

▲ Intake 2 (January – June)
△ 44 students registered
△ 11 students completed the Award
△ Students who completed the award attended 1 training session

“The Edinburgh Award was a very worthwhile experience. I was able to recognise a whole host of skills that I could gain, talk about, and use to promote myself on my CV and in interviews. It gave me the room to focus on my chosen skills and develop them. I think this is a really good opportunity to offer students.”

Areas for improvement
▲ Feedback was sought for each stage of the award programme about training sessions, inputs, communications and the way the programme runs
▲ A few students found navigating through the course material for the Input on LEARN confusing and couldn’t find materials or where submissions were to be made. As a result, the provision of course material will be streamlined for next year

Key Achievements

Volunteering Service Visual Identity and Campaign
In collaboration with our internal Marketing department, a visual identity for the Volunteering Service and new campaign were developed and launched to promote the Volunteering Service.

Awards and Recognition
The Edinburgh Award for Volunteering expanded from one to three intakes in recognition of students who volunteer throughout the year and not just during term time: Semester 1 intake, Semester 2 intake and summer intake. This allowed for greater participation.

For the first time, the Edinburgh Award was run through the Volunteering Hub. This enabled a streamlined process for students to submit and staff to review their work.

For the first time, students who were not able to complete the Edinburgh Award for Volunteering were issued certificates in recognition of the number of hours they volunteered this year.

The Spotlight on Volunteering blog was launched to share stories of our Volunteering Societies, volunteers and inspire other students.
Team Volunteering

We launched one-off volunteering projects to benefit the Edinburgh community and offer students a way to volunteer without a long-term commitment.

No. of Team Leaders: 3
No. of Projects: 10
No. of volunteers: 91
Total hours volunteered: 472.9

Target Ovarian Cancer Walk
Helped out with Target Ovarian Cancer’s event in the centre of Edinburgh. Marshalled the route and encouraged runners, and celebrated with finishers by handing out medals.

Friends of the Bruntsfield Links and Meadows
Helped the Meadows Team to keep the area beautiful and sustainable by assisting with path maintenance and creating new wildlife habitats in the community garden.

Edinburgh Charity Dad’s Rock
Assisted with clearing and brightening up their outdoor garden and play area.

Friends of Burdiehouse Park
Assisted Friends of Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park to protect erosion of one of their paths via innovative Willow Weaving techniques.

Broomlee Outdoor Centre
Assisted with renovating and repainting some of their ageing classrooms. This event was part of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Week.

Edinburgh Christmas Charity Appeal
Helped by being a race official for their annual fundraising event. Marshalling crowds and runners, handing out goody bags, and setting up marquees.

Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)
Decorated an Activity Room used by blind and partially sighted groups.

Feedback from a Team Volunteering project

“Having a clean and renovated classroom will be a huge benefit to the hundreds of children who will use the room next year: We are delighted with the group… really hope that we can have Edinburgh University Students’ Association Volunteers again.”

Broomlee Centre

Careers Fair: Volunteering and Third Sector Jobs
For a second year we collaborated with the University’s Careers Service to showcase paid and UK volunteering opportunities in the Third Sector for students.

Exhibitor quote

“For a second year we collaborated with the University’s Careers Service to showcase paid and UK volunteering opportunities in the Third Sector for students.”

Stalls 53
1,232 students and graduates attended

“I have been doing recruitment fairs for many years and this has been the best yet. Very busy, interactive and lots of genuinely interested students. I will recommend it to other volunteer coordinators across the city.”

Exhibitor quote
Testimonials

“All of the Activities staff are really lovely and really helpful when you need them!”
– Edinburgh Archaeological Outreach Project

“[The Activities Office] are happy to meet, friendly, and they give good advice.”
– Music Outreach Society
Future Developments

▲ Developing a skills development programme suitable for all students who use the Volunteering Service
▲ Building new community partnerships
▲ Expanding the recognition and award offer
▲ Expanding promotional campaign to cover more digital ground, including video
▲ Expanding the Spotlight on Volunteering blog to feature more articles
▲ Continuing to build relationships with schools at the university
▲ Creating a community for volunteers
▲ Expanding outreach to include resident slots at satellite campuses
▲ Building relationships with societies whose activity includes community work but is not their core activity
▲ Develop a Volunteer Champion role for students to raise the profile of volunteering and support their peers
▲ Building a volunteer alumni network
▲ Continuing to support Volunteering Societies
▲ Continuing the Team Volunteering programme
The Social Enterprise Service was launched this year as a pilot offered by the Activities Department in partnership with LAUNCH.ed (Edinburgh Innovations), to support student-led initiatives that aim to deliver businesses in a way that benefits the local community, wider society and the environment.

This pilot aimed to create a sustainable resource to support student-led Social Enterprise projects on campus.

There has been a consistent level of student demand for the service and we met the pilot’s maximum capacity of 5 groups very quickly, delivering a total of 12 individual projects. Overall, these groups involved over 150 students and represented a wide range of interests, as well as different stages of development.

▲ Only 1 of these groups was fully functioning prior to participating in the pilot
▲ 2 were previously existing groups on campus that were looking to expand their services with our support; and
▲ 2 are completely new to the Students’ Association

The Groups

**Hearty Squirrel Food Cooperative**

**Vision:**
▲ Providing healthy, local, ethical, organic and Fairtrade food to students and staff, as well as a unique and informative experience for our volunteers

**Projects:**
▲ Sells homemade soup, dried goods (nuts, grains), eggs and bread sourced from local producers via a stall on campus

**Key achievement**
▲ Opened a stall at a new location (King’s Buildings) and transitioned to a Social Enterprise, thus becoming more professional

**Edinburgh Textile Collective**

**Vision:**
▲ Reinventing the common tote bag, incorporating screen print and sustainable pattern cutting to make it an attractive and circular product
Projects:
- Collects discarded fabric materials from IKEA, creates handmade and hand-printed items (backpacks, laptop cases, tote bags) from the material for sale
- Currently uses the profit to fund stalls at art shows

Key achievement:
- Designed and produced better quality products and secured new partnerships

Edinburgh Health & Fitness

Vision:
- Helping students get more active and help them achieve sustainable healthy lifestyles

Projects:
- Offers highly discounted fitness and nutrition classes in partnership with professional trainers and local charities
- Open to both students and elderly community members, subsidized by special training packages offered to companies in Edinburgh

Key achievement:
- Increased number of people attending both our workshops and training sessions

Our Speakeasy

Vision:
- Engaging communities, and bringing neighbourhoods together through the medium of storytelling

Projects:
- Hosts storytelling events at different venues where people can read their stories to an audience
- Collects handwritten stories through collection boxes stationed through University of Edinburgh campus and the city more broadly

Key achievement:
- Gathered a consistent audience base through hosting regular events

Enactus

Vision:
- Aims to empower people to improve their livelihoods in a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable way

Projects:
- **Edinburgh Candle Company**
  - Women with barriers to traditional employment get microfinance loans from Enactus to purchase candle-making equipment, are trained accordingly on how to produce candles
  - Enactus purchases the candles from the women and resells them both online and in stalls, currently in process of getting store contracts
- **Slurp Soups**
  - Enactus runs a soup stall on a weekly basis on campus, making and selling the soup with disadvantaged youth (beneficiaries)
  - The beneficiaries gain skills and volunteering experience, earn money for educational investment (courses, certifications) or job-seeking purposes (interview wear, etc.)
- **Palma**
  - Mosquito-repellent soap making and selling in Malawi and the Dominican Republic in partnership with local charities
  - In the Dominican Republic, profits fund university education for locals
- **Fog Catcher**
  - Enactus works with local organizations to provide microfinance loans and training for the construction of fog catching systems (catch condensation and run it through filters to produce fresh water)
  - Locals can then access the fresh water for personal consumption or resell at a profit
- **Aiding Change**
  - Enactus provides microfinance loans for solar powered hearing aids in partnership with charities in India, Uganda, Rwanda, Ghana, and Zambia
  - Charities on the ground manage disbursement and usage training
- **Sanitree**
  - Cooperative in India will make and sell reusable sanitary pads within the community using a microfinance loan from Enactus to purchase materials
  - Possible expansion in Kenya, depending on connections
- **Bean Bag**
  - Commercial project/creative agency in the process of developing a support base through pro bono work
  - Logos, web design, social media portfolio building
- **Refermee**
  - Funding certification trainings for 16+/youth for referees

Key achievement:
- Supported 60 vulnerable individuals in different countries to move onto employment or start a business
Highlights of the Year:

▲ Social Enterprise Service was featured as one of the 3 key sections of the University’s Social Impact Pledge. The event involved a number of special guest speakers that introduced the University’s Pledge and our Social Enterprise Service. The event closed with a showcase of some of our Social Enterprise groups during a networking and drinks reception.

▲ One of our groups, Enactus Edinburgh, won the National championship in London out of 58 participating universities in the UK. They will be representing the UK in the world cup which will be held in California in October this year. This is a testament of what can be achieved when we combine the hard work, dedication and talent of our students/groups with a well-planned and tailored support service.

▲ Overall, delivery of a successful pilot stage which supported 12 projects delivered by our 5 groups.

Services Offered

All of our registered Social Enterprise groups benefitted from the following services:

▲ Banking services
▲ Room Booking
▲ Funding (Social Enterprise Start-up Fund and Dragons’ Den-Style Competition)
▲ Activities Fair: Social Enterprise groups have a designated space at the Activities Fair in September and January, with specific signs and branding
▲ Marketing (posters, Students’ Association’s website, tickets, social media)
▲ Recognition (Edinburgh Award for Enterprise, Activities Award, HEAR recognition)
▲ Insurance coverage (public liability, support with any other insurance required, risk assessment)
▲ Licenses (support to obtain trading licenses, food hygiene certificates)
▲ General advice and support
▲ Business advice and support (LAUNCH.ed)
▲ Handbook and guidance materials (introductory pilot handbook, risk assessment and funding guidance, application and registration forms, and constitution templates)

Activities Awards

For the first time this year, the Activities Award included the category of Best Social Enterprise Project. This award recognizes a Social Enterprise project that has had a significant impact on the community it works with by developing skills for vulnerable individuals, reducing environmental impact, or selling eco-friendly products with social benefits.

A number of Social Enterprise projects were nominated, and the following were shortlisted:

▲ Edinburgh Candle Company (Enactus)
▲ Edinburgh Textile Collective
▲ Hearty Squirrel Food Cooperative
▲ Palma Soap (Enactus)

The Award for Best Social Enterprise Project went to Project Sanitree (Enactus).

Finance

At the end of the year, the five groups submitted financial reports covering their financial activity. This incorporates money raised from numerous sources, such as sales, grants, fundraising, membership fees, etc. It also covers costs incurred throughout the year, such as activities and events costs, capital Investment, publicity, etc.

From these reports, we have gleaned the following information:

- Social Enterprises’ expenditure accumulated to £33,398
- Social Enterprises generated a combined total of £36,213

All five groups were awarded funds as part of the Start-up fund and the Dragons’ Den–style Competition.
Social Enterprise Start-up Fund

The Start-Up Fund provides discretionary funding to brand-new Social Enterprise groups or projects. The fund is intended for early stage start-ups that require financial support to kick start their activities, with the objective of reaching a point where the activity is self-sustaining and generates its own income.

Dragons’ Den-Style Competition

The Activities Department, in partnership with LAUNCH ed (Edinburgh Innovations), organised a Dragons’ Den style competition that allowed groups to present a pitch to an expert panel who allocated funds based on their assessment of their project’s originality and potential for growth.

£2,685 granted to 7 different projects

▲ Enactus (Palma Soap), £350: This funding was awarded to support the implementation trip to Malawi in January 2018, as well as the day-to-day operations of the project whilst on the trip

▲ Hearty Squirrel Food Cooperative, £400: The funding was used to support materials to facilitate transport during the Farmer’s market at the university, including trailers, robust plastic and glass containers, calculators, paper bags and jars. It also financed advertisement around campus such as flyers, stickers and painting

▲ Our SpeakEasy, £390: Funds used to pay for stationery, magazine and poster printing, and merchandise

▲ Edinburgh Textile Collective, £645: Used to support the initial production costs of prototypes, such as trace, coating, blasting a screen and screen printing. Additionally, some funding was dedicated to presentation and advertising materials, such as boards, posters, and banners

▲ Edinburgh Health and Fitness, £400: Fund used to pay to the experienced personal trainers and sports equipment, as well as promotional materials

▲ Enactus (Aiding Change), £300: Fund assigned towards subsidising some flight costs of the implementation trip to Uganda as well as cover the training materials for the beneficiaries

▲ Enactus (LilyPads Kenya), £200: Funding used to establish local connections in Kenya and to fund weekly session for the elderly

Competition took place on 24 January and 7 projects received funding for a total of £5,000

▲ Enactus (Fog Catcher), £1300: The grant was awarded towards the implementation of the prototype of a sustainable and ecologically-friendly fog catching system to collect portable water in Nepal and Rwanda, and subsequent training of locals to manage the facility

▲ Enactus (SaniTree), £1100: The funding was granted for the product development of reusable sanitary pads in the UK, the transport for pads to Homa Bay, and the Sanitree Kenya employees’ wages for the first month

▲ Enactus (Palma Soap), £1200: The grant was awarded to support the group’s 14 day trip to the Kasangu district in Malawi, such as flights, accommodation, and transportation; additionally, it aimed to cover production costs such as the purchases of soap ingredients, materials and packaging

▲ Edinburgh Textile collective, £300: Funds used to subsidise the creation of products and to expand the business

▲ Edinburgh Health and Fitness, £300: Grant awarded for a fitness challenges scheme to motivate the members, to be awarded in one-to-one personal training packages. It was also used to finance health experts as well as travel costs for training of committee members

▲ Our SpeakEasy, £300: The grant was awarded towards the DropBox project, through which anonymously written stories were collected around the major junctions/cafes in the University, as well as to fund the first printing of the Stories Book

▲ Hearty Squirrel Food Cooperative, £500: The funding was awarded towards the purchase a bicycle upgraded with a vending storage unit to provide a zero emissions method of transporting goods between venues
Testimonials

“The Activities Fair was very helpful, we got 50 new email sign-up”
– Hearty Squirrel Food Cooperative

“General advice we have gotten has been great. Workshops with well qualified business consultants were also extremely useful. Working in an overall positive and supportive environment has been a great experience. As the president I have had multiple motivating conversations with the members of staff that have certainly helped me to keep going and pushed me to work harder on my project”
– Edinburgh Health and Fitness

“[The Association’s support services] send us lots of emails and are usually available to visit without appointment. Very friendly and approachable. Guided us to proper funding opportunities”
– Our SpeakEasy

“I have received multiple great tips on funding from LAUNCH.ed. They have also been very helpful with developing my business model”
– Edinburgh Health and Fitness

“[The Dragon Den Style competition pitch] went really well, they seemed very interested and there were lots of questions, and I think we explained it well. It is nice to discuss what we love, like textiles, and to hear great feedback about it as well”
– Edinburgh Textile Collective
**Training and Skills Development**

We held two training workshops delivered by external consultants, covering both business and transferable skills.

**HEAR**

Those who were actively engaged in their project, demonstrated through the committee members’ annual reports, were recognised on the HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Record).

**Future Developments**

**Key challenge:** The Activities Team currently does not have the staff capacity to expand the service next year beyond the 5 groups who were part of this pilot stage. Nonetheless, the service has identified a range of areas for further development in the future, if resources permits:

- **Development Areas and Next steps:**
  - Coordinating networking events involving members of the wider Social Enterprise community
  - Skills training workshops tailored to the specific needs of our groups/projects
  - Continue support to our groups with specific focus on project based support
  - Form more partnerships in support of delivering the service, e.g. the Careers Service and Development & Alumni can be involved in and support with the Mentoring scheme. Future partnerships might also involve the Business School and SRS as well as external organisations such as Business Gateway, Scottish Enterprise, and Edinburgh Council
  - While we have met with the committees on a regular basis, we aim to have more fixed, regular meeting in the coming year not only with the committee members of the groups but also with each project
  - With the Social Enterprise advisor in place as of January 2018, based in Edinburgh Innovations (previously LAUNCH.ed) we hope that more business support and advice will be provided to the Social Enterprise groups. We are also aiming to pilot a mentoring scheme this year. We hope that going forward this will add value to our groups, in particular the business side of things
  - We are in talks with the University’s retail team as well as the Students’ Associations commercial team to explore the possibilities of establishing avenues for product sales produced by our groups
  - To increase the visibility of the projects, we are working with our marketing team to find ways to better advertise events or projects run by our groups. We also aim to have a dedicated corner of the Activities Fair in the future – which hopefully gives more exposure to our groups and encourages others to think about Social Enterprise
  - We are exploring new online banking systems to further facilitate viewing transactions and requesting bank transfers
Our Activities Offices are at:

Potterrow | 5/2 Bristo Square | Edinburgh | EH8 9AL
The Pleasance | 60 Pleasance | Edinburgh | EH8 9TJ

eusa.ed.ac.uk/activities
societies@eusa.ed.ac.uk
volunteering@eusa.ed.ac.uk
socialenterprise@eusa.ed.ac.uk

0131 650 9904

/EdUniStudentsActivities
@eusactivities

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