

The Social Mobility Foundation

A Guide for Employers and Professionals

Our work

The Social Mobility Foundation (SMF) is a charity which aims to make a practical improvement in social mobility for young people from low-income backgrounds.

With the help of professionals like you, we aim to empower students who have the academic ability to flourish in the top universities and professions – but who lack the encouragement, confidence and networks to help them get there.

In return, we can help you access a huge pool of untapped talent – allowing you to open your recruitment channels to the brightest students, whilst making your organisation more sustainable for the long term.

More than 90% of employers who work with us say that we help them engage with students they wouldn't reach via their traditional recruitment processes.

The SMF works with firms and organisations across 11 professional sectors in the UK:

- ACCOUNTANCY
- ARCHITECTURE
- BANKING & FINANCE
- BIOLOGY & CHEMISTRY
- BUSINESS
- ENGINEERING & PHYSICS
- LAW
- MEDIA
- MEDICINE
- POLITICS
- TECHNOLOGY



Our students

To qualify for our programmes, sixth form students must:

Be predicted at least ABB at A-level and have at least 5 A grades at GCSE.

They must also:

Be eligible for free school meals (household income less than £16,190)

Or

Have attended a state school where 30% or more students are eligible for free school meals and be the first generation in their family to attend university in the UK.

SMF students attend leading universities:

- In the past seven years, 53% of SMF students' university destinations have been Russell Group universities.

They are impressive:

- 90% of employers felt the SMF students they hosted for placements were of the calibre they would employ after university.

And they want to work for you:

- Last year, 85% of SMF students who carried out short internships said they wanted to work for the same organisation in the future – despite the fact that less than half of them had heard of it before their placement!

MAX HARRIS TRAINEE SOLICITOR, BAKER & MCKENZIE LLP



Max joined the SMF programme in 2007 and during his time with us was provided with a number of opportunities including an internship at a Barrister's Chambers. Max studied law at King's College London and is now a trainee solicitor at Baker & McKenzie LLP.

"My involvement with the Social Mobility Foundation was integral in me obtaining a place at university, and later, a training contract. Applying to read law at any London university is incredibly competitive, and being able to show legal experience helped in making my application stand out. Having provided me with invaluable UCAS advice, and introduced me to my current employer, the Social Mobility Foundation gave me the opportunity to enter the legal world.

I am now a second year trainee solicitor in the Intellectual Property department at Baker & McKenzie LLP, where we advise multi-national corporations on protecting their brand(s) worldwide. I was recently elected as the 2015 Chair of the Junior Lawyers Division of the Law Society of England and Wales, which represents approximately 75,000 members of the legal community. It continues to be an exciting journey, and one which started with the SMF just a few years ago."

Our supporters

We work with more than 200 employers, from SMEs to some of the leading national and international companies. Our supporters include:



An employer's perspective

HANG HO

VICE PRESIDENT, J.P. MORGAN

WHAT BENEFITS DOES WORKING WITH THE SMF BRING TO YOUR ORGANISATION?

"The partnership with the Social Mobility Foundation has enabled J.P. Morgan to reach out to a wider group of talented young people across the UK who might be interested in considering a career in financial services. The residential programme in Banking and Finance that we have been delivering in partnership with the SMF has provided tremendous development opportunities, not only for J.P. Morgan and the J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation as organisations, but also for our employees who have participated as mentors and host managers for the two week work experience."

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR PARTNERSHIP SO FAR?

"It has been incredible to see the change in attitude and perspective, both from the students as well as J.P. Morgan employees throughout the course of each programme, and the long-term mentoring relationships formed between students and employees. And the results have been astonishing, both in terms of the number of students going on to Russell

"It helped build up a sense of camaraderie, unity and purpose within the individual lines of business. It was an extremely rewarding programme, which garnered a lot of praise and support from all levels." —J.P. Morgan employee

Group universities, as well as those who have secured opportunities at other financial and professional services institutions, including follow up ones within J.P. Morgan."

WHY DO YOU THINK THE WORK WITH J.P. MORGAN AND THE SMF IS OF IMPORTANCE TO THE STUDENTS?

"This work is important because it seeks to provide high-achieving and capable young people from across the UK with the opportunity to have real and meaningful experience of a prestigious profession. It helps them to make informed decisions about their future careers and provides them with the tools they need to progress in their pathways, which are not accessible to them currently. It is also important because it brings together people who may never come into contact with one another, promoting a more inclusive and diverse culture within our industry."

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THE SMF AS A PARTNER CHARITY TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS?

"Yes."

We understand that developing a team with the diverse characteristics essential to organisational success is extremely difficult. Working with us helps you to access high achieving students from a wide range of backgrounds.



How can I get involved?

PROVIDE A WORK PLACEMENT

Offer a short one to two week work placement – over the summer holidays or October half term – to one or more SMF students and see them develop into capable, confident young people with professional experience.

Hosting an SMF student gives you a competitive edge when identifying and attracting the brightest new recruits. It is also a great opportunity for existing employees to gain new skills.

Students we have worked with in the past regularly receive employment offers from the firms they were hosted at as 17 year olds.

"SMF students are very engaged during their placements. They ask lots of questions of the people they meet and grasp the engineering concepts presented to them. Over the course of a placement they become more confident and are of the calibre that E.ON would employ after university. My colleagues are inspired by the enthusiasm of the students that we have had in the past and we always enjoy being questioned and quizzed by bright young minds!" — Yasmin Ali, Operations Engineer, E.ON



MANI MOHAMMAD NABI

ANALYST, BANK OF AMERICA MERRILL LYNCH

Mani joined the SMF programme in 2007 and was selected for a six week placement at BP. He has since studied Economics and Accountancy at university and is currently working as an Analyst at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

"As a young student it can be difficult to decide what career path you want to take and how you should approach it. The support and opportunities that the SMF provided me with played a key role in developing my interest within my field and subsequently obtaining the desirable attributes that employers seek.

I am very thankful for all the support and opportunities that the SMF has provided to me, and others like myself."





More ways to get involved

MENTOR A STUDENT

Mentoring a student takes just 15–30 minutes a week via email. Aside from the satisfaction implicit in being able to answer a student's questions and concerns, you and your colleagues can help them:

GET INTO TOP UNIVERSITIES

ACCESS FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES

ENHANCE THEIR CVS AND INTERVIEW SKILLS

HELP WITH UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS

In order to reach the top professions we encourage our sixth form students to apply to selective Russell Group universities, including Oxford and Cambridge.

We know employers like to recruit graduates who have attended leading universities, which is why we take our young people on trips to universities around the country. We also prepare students for admissions tests and interviews, and their personal statements are checked by our mentors.

HOST A SKILLS SESSION

We encourage employers to get involved by hosting a skills session, allowing students to gain an insight into your profession and helping to improve their employment prospects. This might involve a tour of your offices, a presentation or a workshop on CV writing or interview skills.

Nearly 80% of students said that attending SMF events helped them secure a good understanding of their career sector.

OFFER PRO BONO SUPPORT

Many firms choose to support our work by sharing their skills and experience with us on a pro bono basis. Areas you may be able to help us with include:

- IT systems support
- Web and video content
- Graphic design
- Creating promotional materials

Alternatively, you could be an advocate for our work and spread the word within your network.

“It was very beneficial to be able to email someone who has experienced taking A-levels and going to university. It also gave me an insight into my mentor's job and the type of things I could learn and take part in.” —Jinali, SMF Mentee



ADELE ASHURI GEOLOGY STUDENT, UCL

Adele joined the SMF in 2009 and her time with us has included a placement at SSE Plc. She is currently studying Geology at University College London.

“The Social Mobility Foundation is an excellent charity and has set me on a great foundation to achieve all my career aspirations. As well as providing me with an excellent mentor, they also set up an internship, working at a well-known national company, SSE plc (formerly Scottish and Southern Energy).

Through talking to a member of the SMF staff, I was also given the great opportunity of a work placement at a mining company in London, Regency Mines.

Such experiences have allowed me to stand out and helped me to attain an offer from University College London (UCL). I am grateful for the opportunities that the Social Mobility Foundation offered me, as I definitely know I would not be where I am today without them. The programme they offer is first class and there is an ever growing need for it.”



KAMIL PRICE-LATORRE TRAINEE SOLICITOR, ALLEN & OVERY LLP

In 2007, Kamil was supported by the SMF with a placement at a Barrister's chamber. He is currently a trainee solicitor at Allen & Overy LLP.

“The SMF introduced me to concepts and opportunities that would otherwise have been alien to me. They provided that crucial first step and invaluable work experience pre-university. It was the experiences I enjoyed under their organisation that fed me with the impetus and drive to pursue a degree in law and ultimately a career as a solicitor.

Even more impressively, in the years since my work placement, the SMF has continued to make all efforts to support people like me; the support they make available to their undergraduate and graduate participants had not waned.”



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