

Making a Difference

How we have broken down financial barriers to the legal sector in 2022.



aspiringsolicitors
foundation



Introduction

The Board of Trustees are pleased to share this impact assessment of the work and successes of The Aspiring Solicitors Foundation (ASF) in 2022.

The Aspiring Solicitors Foundation supports individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds to access careers in the legal sector by providing financial assistance to support their law studies.

We believe that every one, no matter their background, should have the means and access to enter the legal profession. However, in the UK socio-economic diversity is currently greatly lacking among solicitors. According to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) in 2021, 58% of solicitors in the UK come from a professional background, meaning their parents were in professional occupations rather than intermediate or working class occupations. UK solicitors are also three times more likely to have attended a fee-paying or independent school and are half as likely to come from a lower socio-economic background.

With such a significant difference in the background of solicitors across the UK, we are dedicated to supporting aspiring solicitors from lower-income backgrounds with their legal ambitions and to improve social mobility across the law profession.

By working with our founders and supporters, we support aspiring solicitors facing financial difficulty by providing grants that offer tuition fee discounts, laptops, study resources, work wear or travel tickets. Through these provisions, we support those entering the legal world to access appropriate work experience and support with their studies, which not only helps them realise their long-held career ambitions, but also enhances the workforce of commercial law firms across the United Kingdom.

We are proud that in 2022 we have been able to support 157 aspiring solicitors to make crucial steps in their legal careers.

Our objective

Removing financial barriers to the legal profession for aspiring solicitors.

Our strategy

Raise funds from law firms, in-house legal departments, corporates, financial services firms and individuals to help provide grants that deliver meaningful assistance with tangible benefits to eligible, socially mobile, aspiring solicitors identified through a fair and objective application process.

Our impact in 2022

We are proud that in 2022 The AS Foundation provided the highest number of grants than any other year, helping to open access to the legal sector for a high number of aspiring solicitors.

383

Applications received

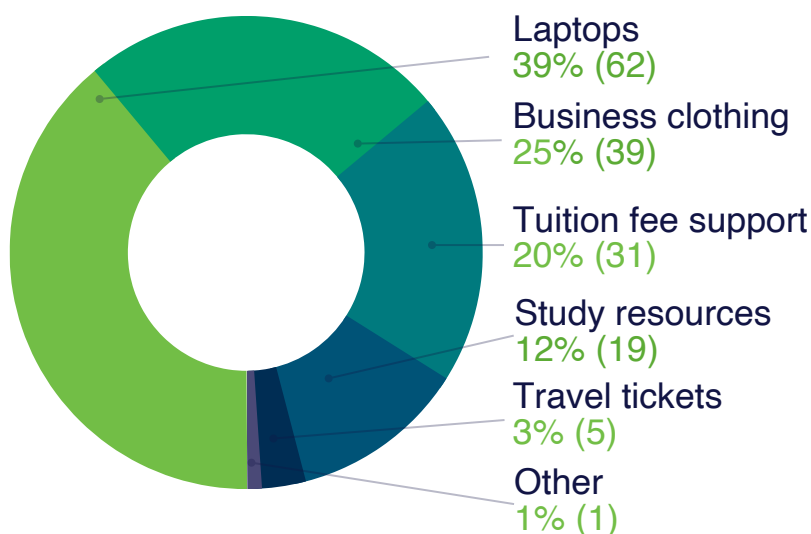
157

Awards granted

£832

Avg. grant value

Our grants



Tuition fee grants per institution

31 ASF Grant Recipients were supported to attend three esteemed law institutions in the UK.



23 Applicants



7 Applicants



1 Applicant

Our applicants

In 2022 we received applications from a wide variety of backgrounds and geographies.

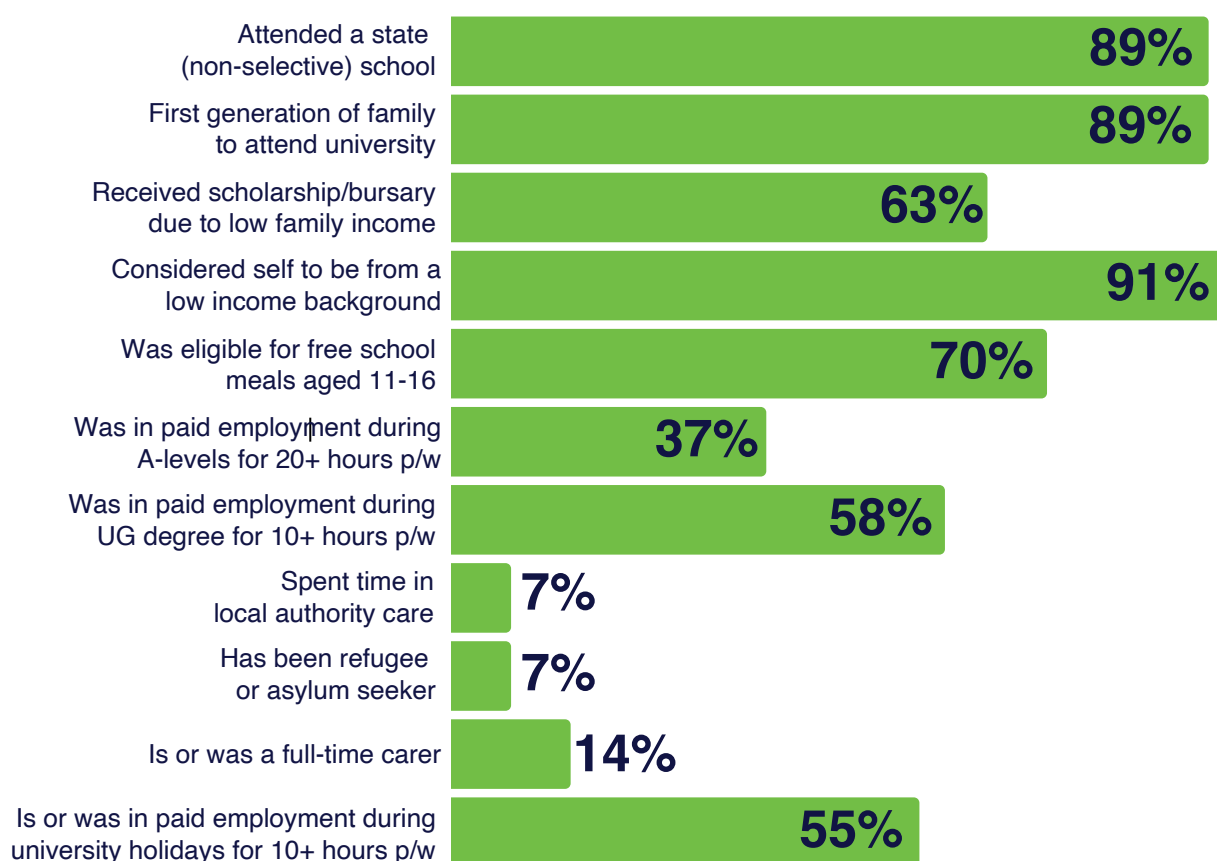
This map shows the approximate geographic spread of successful ASF Grant Recipients in the UK.



Our impact in 2022

Our grant application process assesses applicants on a wide range of accepted social mobility indicators, ensuring that our support goes to the right people.

Our successful applicants



Total % of approved applicants



The grant made starting my internship less daunting as I had one less thing to worry about. It also helped me to be confident in work and in finding my style and identity within the workplace.

ASF Grant Recipient

What our grant recipients think

In December 2022 we surveyed a sample size of ASF grant recipients on their views of the Aspiring Solicitors Foundation.

90%

agreed or strongly agreed with
the statement

**The AS Foundation
helped ease some of
my financial worries**

93%

agreed or strongly agreed with
the statement

**Applying to the
AS Foundation
benefitted me**

98%

agreed or strongly agreed with
the statement

**I would recommend
the AS Foundation
to a friend**

90%

agreed or strongly agreed with
the statement

**The application
process is straight
forward and simple**

90%

agreed or strongly agreed with
the statement

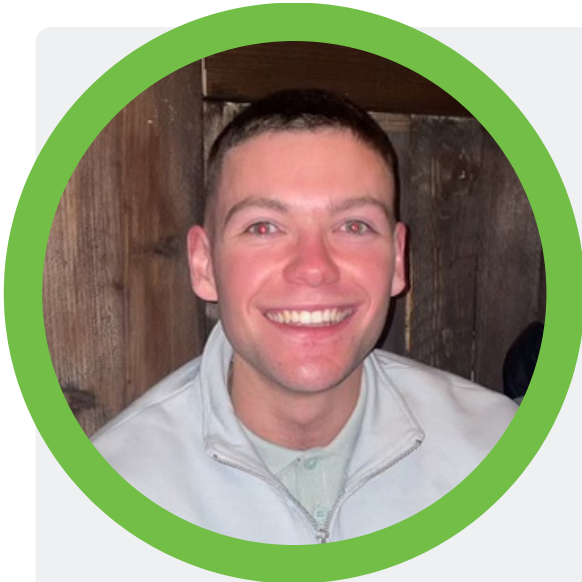
**I would reapply to
the AS Foundation**

98%

agreed or strongly agreed with
the statement

**The AS Foundation
is an important social
mobility charity**

Who we have supported



James

James is a 4th year undergraduate LLB student at Glasgow Caledonian University.

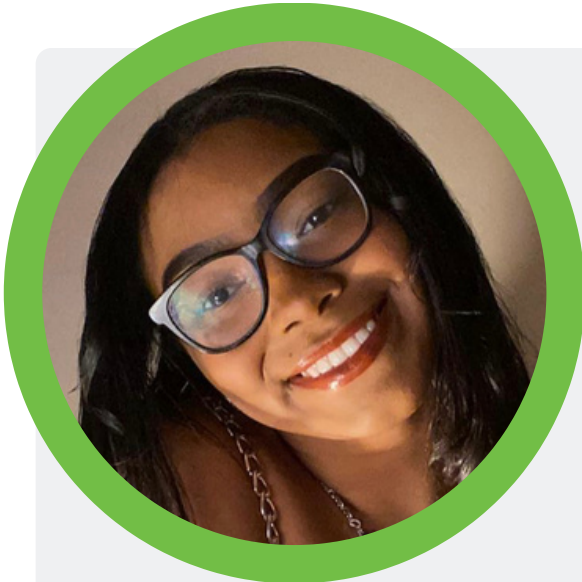
He received a grant from the ASF for business clothing to support him during his summer vacation scheme placement.

"I have always worked part-time since I was 16 to financially support myself through university, but upon securing a summer vacation scheme place I realised that I would require quite a lot of additional business attire for my time at the firm. This would incur quite a big outlay. Therefore, I applied to the foundation and was granted support which enabled me to turn up feeling like I belonged, which eased some of my biggest worries and gave me confidence. This allowed me to make a good impression on my supervisors and graduate recruitment, leading to a training contract offer at an elite international law firm.

I have now accepted a training contract offer that commences in August 2024. Before this I will complete my LLB, graduating in 2023, before then completing my Diploma in Legal Practice between 2023 and 2024.

This is a real achievement for a socially mobile candidate like myself who was the first generation in my family to study at university or pursue a professional career really at all. The grant was a huge help in this."

Who we have supported



La'Shaunna

La'Shaunna is currently on her paralegal placement year learning about residential property law and the conveyancing process.

She received support from ASF to purchase business professional clothing for law opportunities.

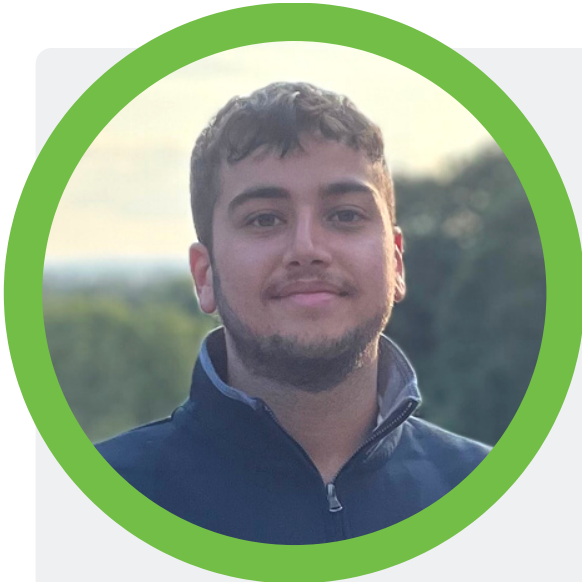
"I applied for the grant because I need support after being successful in attaining four vacation schemes and a placement year. I was working 5+ part time positions in order to support myself at university where I was a full time LLB Law student.

I applied for the grant as I did not have any business professional clothing. Heading straight into my year paralegal placement I knew that I did not have enough income to satisfy the requirements of 'looking the part' in a firm consistently. This grant however offered me the chance to purchase clothing so that I would not stand out for the wrong reasons. In essence it levelled the field so that I would not feel out of place for wearing the wrong clothes.

I've just celebrated my 21st birthday with my paralegal placement year firm and I am now a future trainee solicitor at the national commercial law firm. I also recently won the Law Student of the Year Award at The Inspirational Women in Law Awards 2022.

My journey into law is a reminder to myself to work hard, and push boundaries. I am grateful to this charity for being a part of my journey."

Who we have supported



Arta

Arta is a second-year law student at the University of Exeter.

He recieved support from ASF in the form of a new laptop after not having suitable equipment to work on his studies.

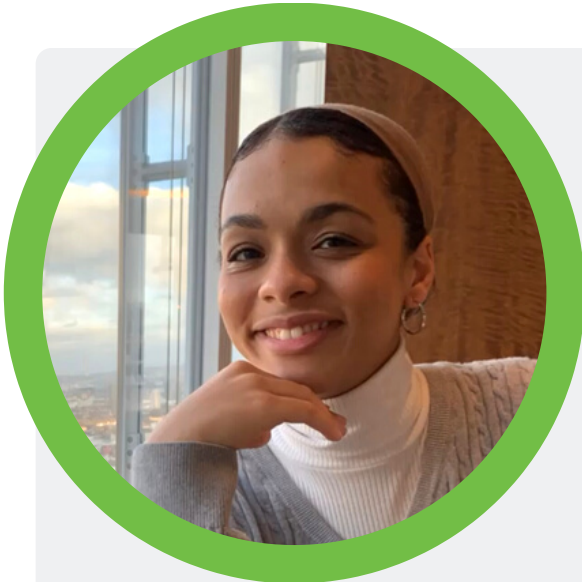
I am a state-educated, first-generation student from London. My motivation for pursuing a career in law stemmed from undertaking legal work experience at a commercial law firm during my A-levels.

During my first year studying law, my laptop would randomly stop working, and this would prolong the time I spent on assessments and exams. Money was tight, so purchasing a new laptop was not possible. However, I knew that the requirement of a new laptop would aid me in my law degree.

Receiving a laptop from the AS Foundation has allowed me to write applications to law firms for their vacation schemes. I can also spend less time on assessments and exams as this laptop doesn't crash. This has freed up my time and allowed me to worry less about my laptop not working and losing my documents.

The AS Foundation is breaking financial barriers that students such as myself face. It is fantastic that I have been supported by the AS Foundation and I urge students in a similar position to apply for financial support."

Who we have supported



Tamika

Tamika is currently in her second year of her graduate diploma in law at BPP University.

She received support from ASF with the cost of tuition fees which helped her access her studies and further her legal career.

I had been considering a legal career for a while as I deal with a lot of comparative legislation (pan-Commonwealth) and constitutional law at work. However, despite working two jobs, financial barriers meant that pursuing law seemed more like a dream than a reality.

I discovered the AS Foundation and applied for a tuition fee support which has helped relieve the financial burden whilst studying. Support from the AS Foundation has meant that I am able to pursue a GDL at BPP university. I am currently halfway through the GDL and really enjoying everything I am learning.

Building on my current work in anti-human trafficking and modern slavery, I plan to pursue a career, exploring international human rights law and combatting crimes of a sexual nature. I'm particularly interested in the rise of digital sex crimes and the evolution of legislation to protect against them.

The AS Foundation is an extremely supportive organisation and has been critical to my being able to pursue a career in law.

With thanks to our supporters

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**For more information
please visit:**

TheASF.org.uk
