

**Mimi Nanud**  
Seren 2022 Graduate  
History at the  
University of Oxford



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



# **SEREN**

## **PROSPECTUS**

**CLASS OF 2022/2023**





# WELCOME

## Poppy Stowell-Evans

**Seren Graduate studying global affairs at Yale University**

*"I am set to study global affairs at Yale University and also received offers from Cambridge, Richmond and Stanford. Seren played a key role in making that happen. It supports learners, whatever their background, to aim high and achieve their goals."*

## Donte Day

**Seren Graduate currently studying economics at the University of Chicago**

*"I'd always wanted to study in a big city and Chicago ticks all the boxes, with one of the best economics schools in the world. If it wasn't for Seren, I wouldn't be where I am today as I would never have thought of going to university in America."*

## Marzooq Subhani

**Seren Foundation learner at Willows High School, Cardiff**

*"Seren organised a trip to the University of Oxford where we learnt about life as a student there. We also recently travelled to Dubai to represent the UK, debating at the 2022 'World Expo'. It was a very proud moment and great to get see our school recognised."*

## Ffion Wood

**Seren Graduate studying medicine at Hertford College, University of Oxford**

*"Growing up in rural North Wales, I used to think Oxbridge universities were a fairy tale and not for people like me. Now I've got an offer to study medicine at Oxford and I couldn't have done it without Seren's support."*

## Siriol Hughes

**Seren Graduate studying law at Bangor University**

*"Attending a workshop led by Bangor University law school, through Seren, inspired me to study law at uni. I'd advise new Seren learners to take advantage of every opportunity and absorb as much as you can. Through Seren, I have developed into an independent person ready for future challenges."*

## Hannah Hayman

**Seren Graduate studying at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Nursing**

*"Seren's seminars in cancer research and treatment enabled me to learn a totally new subject at higher level. Even aspects such as how to take notes and use resources properly, were so useful. Seren helps determined and driven learners realise they are capable, giving them the skills and confidence to reach beyond their comfort zone."*



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# WELCOME TO SEREN

**Seren is a Welsh Government initiative dedicated to helping Wales' brightest state educated learners achieve their full academic potential and support their education pathway into leading universities in Wales, the UK, and overseas.**

It is a collaboration between the Welsh Government, schools, colleges, leading universities, Seren Graduates, local authorities and third sector organisations to provide extensive national and regional activities.

Seren is a fully funded programme available to year 8 to 13 learners from state schools and further education colleges across Wales, regardless of their economic background, personal situation, or location. By providing extra-curricular study experiences and enrichment activities that go beyond the curriculum, Seren supports you to widen your horizons, develop passion for your chosen field of study, and achieve your goals.

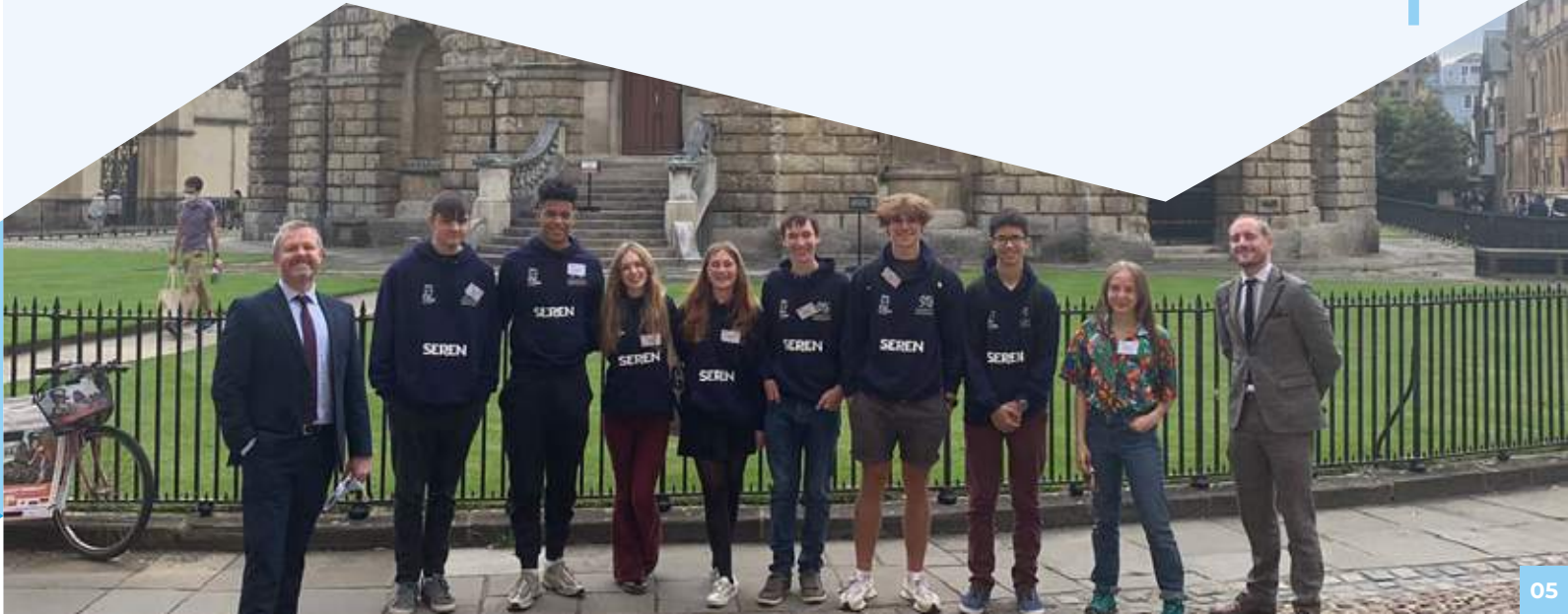
Working with leading universities and education partners, support includes subject masterclasses, workshops, tutorials, study guides, mentoring, advice and guidance.

The programme is split into Seren Foundation, which supports years 8-11 and Seren Academy, which offers support for year 12 and 13 learners in schools as well as first and second year learners in further education settings.

For Foundation learners, the focus is on helping you make informed decisions about GCSE and A level subject choices and getting you to think about your future university and career goals.

Seren Academy provides unique opportunities to receive direct advice from university admissions tutors on how to apply to leading universities, develop competitive personal statements, prepare for admissions tests and approach interviews.

Seren also offers year 11 Foundation learners and year 12 Academy learners the chance to experience undergraduate-level study through exclusive university summer schools.



# MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SEREN EXPERIENCE

As a Seren learner, you will be offered an extensive range of activities and opportunities to take part in, from webinars and masterclasses to summer schools and awards. You will also have access to a whole variety of resources to support you on your journey to higher education.

All the activities, opportunities and materials available to you are designed to support your ongoing studies, help you realise where your passions lie and confirm your ambitions to further your education at a leading university.

**“Seren has really helped organise my thinking about what I might want to do and why. It’s also shown me new options and helped me think about possibilities for the future. Before Seren I’d never have considered these things, I had no idea what I might focus on. I wasn’t sure I even wanted to go to university, but being made aware of possibilities is so useful, even though it’s still early days. It’s also really improved my confidence and helped a lot of my friends, too. Sometimes I think there’s less recognition from afar for Welsh learners, which can lower your self-confidence. That’s why Seren is so helpful, and I’m looking forward to the next few years on the programme.”**

**Libby Worthington**

Seren Foundation learner at Ysgol Friars in Bangor

We encourage you to grab as many opportunities as you can, but what you choose to get involved with is up to you. Here are a couple of recommendations to make the most out of your experience:

- Welcome meeting hosted by your region’s hub coordinator
- Attend a Seren summer school
- Meet university representatives to understand your options

- Meet Seren Graduates to understand how the Seren programme has helped them
- Take advantage of our university admission test and interview preparation sessions

We hope reading the stories of previous Seren learners throughout this prospectus will inspire you to reach for the stars.

**“Seren showed me how to reach my goals and reshaped my thinking. The masterclasses in psychology inspired me and helped me decide on what I want to study at university. My advice to any new learners joining the Seren programme is to take as many opportunities as you can. I am looking forward to the next chapter and can’t wait to experience university life.”**

**Catrin Thomas**

Seren Academy learner at St Joseph’s RC Comprehensive School in Port Talbot



**Catrin Thomas**  
Seren Academy learner



# A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

**As a parent or carer of a Seren learner, we would like to welcome you and your family to Seren. Your understanding of the programme is key to helping your child make the most of Seren.**

Your child will have access to a broad range of activities and opportunities, delivered by top universities and education providers, to support their learning. Seren will support your child to access opportunities at top universities and develop the skills required to apply to them.

Your child can choose to take part in as many – or few – activities as they wish. However, we encourage Seren learners to get involved with as many opportunities that interest them, and to stretch themselves, while being sensible about how much they can realistically take on. Previous Seren learners have demonstrated how, by taking part in opportunities, the programme can prove highly motivational and boost their confidence to help them achieve success that they didn't initially think they would be capable of.

## How you can help

Through Seren, your child's horizons will be widened, their skills stretched and their thinking challenged. It is important to note being selected for the programme is just the first step. What learners go on to achieve and experience is up to them, but with your support, they can make the most of the opportunities available to them.

Firstly, please ask your child to read the many inspirational quotes and stories from learners and Seren Graduates feature in this prospectus. Hearing from their peers can be very motivational.

We also have a lot of resources, including advice on how to support your child with their university applications, understanding the differences with the university admissions processes, and student finance.

“

*I am incredibly proud of what Poppy has achieved. Poppy's acceptance to study at Yale this year is not only an ode to her dedicated studies, but to the great work of Seren who pushed her to explore her options and unlock her academic potential.*

*Poppy had always had her heart set on Cambridge and was able to access numerous online assets to help her boost her application. Poppy was invited to join in on test prep sessions and masterclasses where she grew in confidence and began to broaden her ambitions before being invited on to programmes like the Sutton Trust summer schools and the Yale Young Global Scholars programme. Seren not only connected her to her dream university but introduced her to the idea of studying in America, and the rest is history.*

*My advice to any parents? Work alongside Seren to do all you can to support your child as they work towards their dreams and broaden their horizons. Seren is here for us, just as much as for our children.*”

**Emma Corten**

*parent of Poppy Stowell-Evans*



# SEREN HUB TEAM

There are 12 coordinators within the Hub team who represent a region. Your regional hub co-ordinator will support your Seren journey. Your hub co-ordinator liaises with schools and further education colleges and acts as the main point of contact for learners, teachers, tutors, parents and carers.

Your hub coordinator will be able to guide you through the programme of activities and answer any of your queries, provide advice or even to chat through things. The hub coordinators also work together to provide even wider opportunities by coming together to deliver activities.

Here are the coordinators for each hub:

**1 Gwynedd & Anglesey**  
Elfed T Morris  
[ElfedMorris@gwynedd.llyw.cymru](mailto:ElfedMorris@gwynedd.llyw.cymru)

**2 Conwy & Denbighshire**  
Clare Scanlon, Conwy  
[clare.scanlon@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:clare.scanlon@conwy.gov.uk)  
Sian Morgan, Denbighshire  
[sian.morgan@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:sian.morgan@denbighshire.gov.uk)

**3 Flintshire and Wrexham**  
Debra Hughes  
[seren@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:seren@wrexham.gov.uk)

**4 Powys**  
Francesca Sandwell  
[francesca.sandwell@powys.gov.uk](mailto:francesca.sandwell@powys.gov.uk)

**5 EAS Consortia (Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Newport)**  
Sian Farquharson  
[Sian.Farquharson@sewaleseas.org.uk](mailto:Sian.Farquharson@sewaleseas.org.uk)

**6 Cardiff**  
Rebecca Peplow  
[RPeplow@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:RPeplow@cardiff.gov.uk) or [seren@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:seren@cardiff.gov.uk)

**7 Vale of Glamorgan**  
Nisha Shukla  
[nshukla@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:nshukla@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

**8 Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil**  
Stephen Parry-Jones  
[parjon@talktalk.net](mailto:parjon@talktalk.net)

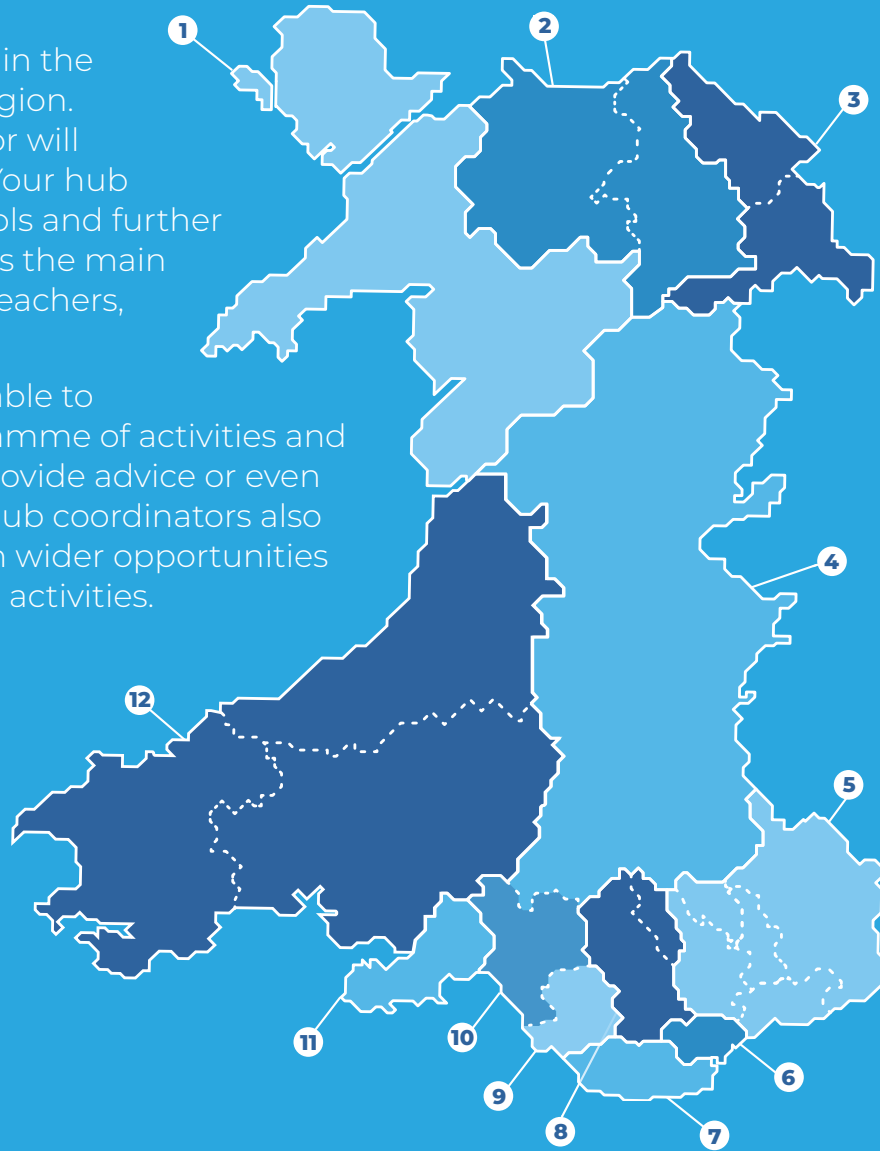
**9 Bridgend**  
Sarah Humphreys  
[sarah.humphreys@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.humphreys@bridgend.gov.uk)

Neil Arbery  
[Neil.Arbery@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:Neil.Arbery@bridgend.gov.uk)

**10 Neath Port Talbot**  
Karen Thomas  
[k.thomas5@npt.gov.uk](mailto:k.thomas5@npt.gov.uk)

**11 Swansea**  
Fiona Beresford  
[Fiona.beresford@gowercollegeswansea.ac.uk](mailto:Fiona.beresford@gowercollegeswansea.ac.uk)

**12 Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire**  
Bethan Jones-Hughes  
[BJones-Hughes@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:BJones-Hughes@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)



You can download a list of all the participating schools within the 12 regional hubs, and the contact details for your regional coordinator from the Welsh Government [website](#).

# KEEP CONNECTED



## Talk...

Please talk to a representative at your school in the first instance. This may be a dedicated Seren coordinator, your head of sixth form or college, or Key Stage teacher, for example.



## Email...

Your coordinator will send you regular communication and event announcements direct to your inbox. Be sure to check your mail regularly – you don't want to miss an application deadline, or online university Q&A session.



## Seren Space...

Will be Year 12 Academy learners' new best friend on Seren – a portal where you can find a range of resources, events and opportunities open to you as a Seren learner.



## Get social...

Follow us on social media to find out about all the latest Seren news and events. Twitter is the go-to place to hear about all the exciting opportunities, events, activities and resources you can take advantage of so give us a follow.





# WHAT IS SEREN FOUNDATION?

**Seren Foundation is an aspirational programme for year 8-11 learners at Welsh state schools to support the development of skills and academic ability.**

As a Foundation learner, we want to inspire you to reach for the stars and consider all options for your future. You will be supported in developing the skills you'll need to enter top universities. You will also receive guidance to make informed study choices for your future.

It offers inspiration and advice about different subjects, university options and degree courses, as well as information on various careers and routes into them. While going to university might seem a long way off, it is never too early to start thinking about your dream career or what you need to get there.

Seren will help you develop valuable skills required at GCSE and A level, such as analytical and critical thinking, reasoning, problem solving, communication, and revision techniques through a mix of events, masterclasses and online sessions.

You'll learn about essay writing and how to present and debate your ideas - which will benefit you at university and in your career - and will have the opportunity to join summer schools, enter competitions and take part in other interesting activities!

**Ellie Denscombe, Director of Science and a teacher of Seren Foundation learners at Llantwit Major School:**

*"Seren has played a key role in engaging and motivating our learners with its expertly planned and executed programme of events. The opportunities it offers are second to none and in some cases even life changing! I have witnessed first-hand how Seren inspires learners to push the boundaries of their perceived limits and challenge themselves to achieve things they never thought possible. The enthusiasm learners have after enrolling is infectious and has a positive impact on not just themselves, but the wider school community. I am only sorry I am too old to enrol myself!"*

# SEREN FOUNDATION NATIONAL PROGRAMME

**Throughout the year you will be able to take part in a wide range of activities tailored to your specific year group.**

Here's a taste of what you can get involved in...

- Subject-specific masterclasses hosted by leading UK universities to super-charge your studies
- Academic 'stretch and challenge' workshops
- Modern language courses
- Sector-based sessions such as workshops focused on how to become a vet or medic
- STEM seminars and tutorials
- Careers advice and sessions exploring where your GCSE and A level choices could lead you
- Guidance about higher education and university courses
- Essay and creative writing competitions
- Take part in the Seren Foundation Award to build the required skills for your future
- Summer school opportunities
- Regional face-to-face events throughout the year

**You will also receive a reflective journal for you to tailor your own Seren experience and build your pathway to the future.**



# FOUNDATION SUMMER SCHOOLS

**As a Seren Foundation learner you will get the opportunity to take part in summer schools with some of the UK's leading universities.**

Our Foundation summer schools are a chance for you to experience what studying at university is really like. Whether you attend in-person or virtually, you will get an invaluable introduction into university level education and learning, helping you to understand what is required from you as an undergraduate and see whether higher education might be an option for you.

You will learn from subject experts and university lecturers, developing your critical thinking and academic skills, while learning more advanced approaches to research, writing and analysis that will support your GCSE studies and help you prepare for your educational journey.

As well as boosting your skills, summer schools will give you the opportunity to deepen your knowledge and explore your favourite subjects in more detail. This can be useful in helping you determine what subjects you might want to pursue in the future.

Summer schools are also a fantastic experience you can reference in your personal statements and interviews when you do apply for university.

Whatever subjects drive your passion, summer schools will have an opportunity for you - the skills you'll develop and the experiences you'll gain will be relevant no matter where your educational journey takes you.

*"The STEMHaus summer school has given me EXCELLENT advice on what to expect at A Level and has made me aware of what subjects to take for my future career. The tutors delivering the sessions were experienced and very inspirational, offering lectures full of information that gave us a head start on our future studies."*

**Hannah Louise Roberts**  
Seren Foundation learner

## The 2022 Seren Foundation Summer Schools

Here is a summary of our 2022 summer schools:

### Aberystwyth University Summer School

This three-day residential programme at Aberystwyth University – ranked Wales's best university for student satisfaction in the 2022 National Student Survey - gave year 11 learners the chance to study and live like a real undergraduate, attending lectures and socialising with other learners on campus.

Featuring academic classes in various subjects, from biology to business, creative writing to politics, it provided over 60 learners with insights into different topics to help them see what degree they might enjoy. They also took part in cultural activities at Aberystwyth's flagship arts centre including yoga, drama, dance, pottery, screen printing and film making.

### University of Oxford Seren Foundation Summer School

Offering a unique opportunity for year 11 Seren learners to live and study at New College Oxford for five days, this summer school provided an introduction into what studying at Oxford entails. Over 70 learners from across Wales took part in tours of the university's world-famous

colleges, attended lectures and workshops, and joined Q&As with Welsh students.

Learners found out about Oxford's admissions process and received tips on applying to the university. They also enjoyed extra-curricular activities including punting, museum visits, quizzes, a walking tour of Oxford and group meals on campus.

### STEMHaus online Summer School

This five-day online summer school, developed with Equal Education Partners and the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, was for Seren learners in years 9 and 11 with an interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM). Designed to support their transition into studying these subjects at GCSE and A level, 85 learners heard from inspiring STEM professionals and attended online seminar-style lectures exploring a range of topics, such as cryptography, computer science and architecture. They also received advice on choosing subjects at GCSE and A level and learned about STEM degrees and career opportunities.

**Look out for our summer schools for 2023.**





# THE SEREN FOUNDATION AWARD

**The Seren Foundation Award began in 2021, giving Seren Foundation learners in years 8-11 the opportunity to boost their skills and gain an insight into university.**

You will spend a week working on an exciting yet challenging project in a subject area of your choice. You will attend masterclasses hosted by an expert PhD tutor who is currently studying at a leading university in the UK. Alongside the academic sessions, you will be expected to complete set reading tasks, which will support you to draft a final 1,000 – 1,500 word assignment. This piece of work will be submitted and graded by the tutor like a real university assignment, with feedback provided.

This is a brilliant way for you to develop your academic abilities and find out more about a topic you are interested in, while gaining an insight into university teaching.

## How do I apply?

Your teacher will need to register on behalf of a group of learners interested in taking part. Teachers will be asked to select a subject to enrol learners onto, before inputting each one of their personal details ahead of the programme. If you are a Foundation learner interested in the Award, you should contact your school's Seren coordinator or teacher, who will be able to apply on your behalf.



***“Tutoring on the Seren Award and working with such a talented group of learners has been an incredibly rewarding and enjoyable experience. The learners’ insightful questions and contributions to group discussions were fantastic and I was impressed by the high standard of their final assignments. I look forward to hopefully working on the Seren Award again in the future!”***

**Emily Wright**  
PhD research tutor,  
University of Reading



# WHAT IS SEREN ACADEMY?

**The Seren Academy invites the brightest and most academically able learners in years 12 and 13 across Wales to join the programme. Learners like YOU.**

As part of the programme, while you are studying for your A levels, you will take part in a range of interactive activities and study experiences designed to support your learning. You will also receive expert guidance to help you make informed decisions as you prepare for your next steps to university.

## Here’s a taste of what you can expect:

- An invitation to the national online Seren Academy Conference, which brings together learners and leading academics for a packed programme that goes beyond the curriculum
- Masterclasses, lectures and guidance workshops from admissions tutors and academics at leading universities including Oxford and Cambridge
- Access to university admissions test prep sessions covering a wide range of subjects, which form part of the entry process for many universities
- Fascinating subject-specific masterclasses delivered by university experts covering a broad range of subjects including law, physics, engineering, maths, English and medicine
- Expert guidance for writing a competitive personal statement and preparing for interviews
- Opportunities to apply for Seren’s exclusive university summer schools, including the acclaimed Seren-Jesus College Oxford Residential Summer School in partnership with the University of Oxford
- Mentoring and live Q&A sessions from academics and previous Seren learners

# THE SEREN ACADEMY PROGRAMME

Throughout the year you will be able to take part in a wide range of inspiring programmes, activities and challenges tailored to your specific year group.

## Here's a taste of what you can get involved in...

- Opportunities for work experience in areas such as law or medicine
- Personal statement and interview workshops from academics and admissions tutors
- Online mock interviews
- Dedicated Oxford and Cambridge guidance
- Mentoring and links to Seren Graduates studying at leading universities
- Regional face-to-face events throughout the year
- Participation in national awards and challenges such as the British Physics Olympiad and Oxplore's essay writing competition



# THE SEREN ACADEMY AWARD

The Seren Award is a challenging study programme for year 12 learners designed to replicate studying as an undergraduate at a leading UK university.

If you choose to take part in the Award, you will work with an expert PhD tutor for a week on a research project in a subject of your choice. You will attend academic masterclasses and online tutorials and be tasked with reading a variety of materials before producing a final 1,500-2,000 word university-style assignment which will receive a university grading and feedback.

Each PhD tutor is currently studying at a leading UK university and their tutorials are based around their real research, offering you an exciting insight into the approaches used within higher education.

The Seren Award will support your transition from A levels to university by teaching you skills you will need like referencing, effective notetaking, how to evaluate data and how to think critically and analytically.

It is a great opportunity to develop your skills and enhance university applications as you'll be able to refer to it in your personal statement and interviews.

Places are offered on merit via applications. Academy learners interested in taking part will be asked to complete a brief application form stating their subject of interest and academic details.

**Look out for the application open date.**

***"I took part in a range of Seren opportunities which shaped my thinking, taught me new skills and confirmed my love for maths. This included the Seren Award, which was a really helpful experience – it enabled me to gain valuable new writing skills, such as how to reference, structure and format a winning essay, which I will need at university."***

**Eeva Salo**, Seren Graduate.





# PATHWAY PARTNERSHIPS

**At Seren, we strive to give you as many opportunities as possible to explore the areas you're interested in and help you prepare for your future goals.**

We collaborate with organisations and programmes who provide professional and sector led support for learners. As well as boosting your applications, these opportunities provide a fantastic insight into various careers and courses so you can find what's right for you.

**Here are just a few of the programmes you can expect:**

## Interested in law?

The law can seem like a difficult sector to enter if you don't already have connections to the industry. The LEDLET-Legal Wales summer scheme gives year 12 learners the chance to see what the legal industry is like as they spend a week working alongside various law professionals in either Cardiff or London. The experience enables learners to gain an insight into the different career routes on offer.

## Sêr Cymreig

New for this year, Seren is introducing 'Sêr Cymreig' – a programme of four competitions for year 12 Academy learners in physics, linguistics, mathematics and informatics. Organised by academic volunteers from universities and Seren, the competitions in each subject offer preparation for demanding university admissions tests. Designed to develop your skills and boost your university applications, you'll take part in challenges, receive tutoring and apply your knowledge at a greater depth than covered at A level. You'll be able to choose from one of the four subject areas – each of which has relevance to a wide range of university courses.

*"My advice to any learners thinking about applying to the LEDLET summer scheme would be to go for it. Be courageous and ambitious and take the once in a lifetime chance to experience the legal sector like you haven't before."*

**Ryan Lenihan**, Seren Graduate

## Programmes for aspiring medics

Our North Wales Medics Programme, in collaboration with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Widening Access to Medicine and Dentistry, is an initiative aimed at linking bright Welsh learners with careers in medicine. Academy learners on the programme will work with current medicine undergraduates and have access to a range of information, advice, coaching and practical experiences to help them on their journey to medical school. They will get guidance on the admission process, personal statements and interviews, get insights into the medical profession, and have the opportunity to join hospital placements.

Available pan-Wales, (look out for this type of model developing in other areas in Wales), the **Medic Mentors** programme offers mentoring, conferences and a variety of sessions to give learners an insight into careers in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science.

*"A lot of learners don't know where to start when it comes to applying for medicine. There are lots of hoops to jump through and it can be very daunting without the right support. That's why I find it so fulfilling working with Seren and passing on the insights from my own journey, to help demystify the process. I've been there, I've done it myself, so I can share the knowledge I've gained."*

**Jamie Scriven** final year medical student at Cardiff University, who volunteers on the North Wales Medics programme.

## For the keen linguists among you...

Seren has partnered up with Routes into Languages Cymru and Jesus College, Oxford to provide exclusive modern language tuition sessions for Seren Foundation learners. Those on the programme can expect to take part in mini lectures and challenges, and hear how the skills learned through languages can prepare them for future employment.





# MENTORING SUPPORT

**Seren has recruited students, academics and professionals from leading universities and organisations across the UK to offer mentoring support to Seren learners hoping to follow the same academic path as them.**

If you would like support from a mentor, speak with your hub coordinator, if you feel you would benefit from such support.

## What will mentoring support involve?

You will be assigned a mentor that closely matches your chosen course and university. They will guide you through the application process, offering advice and support either through video calls in a group setting, or via email.

Depending on your chosen support, it may include:

- Tailored support for your specific course and/or university from someone who has successfully gone through the application process
- An insight into your target course and/or university

- Support developing your personal statement
- Personalised admissions test preparation
- Interview preparation and mock interviews
- Useful tips, advice and resources for applying to university

This is the most tailored type of application support available, and as the mentors are either recent graduates or current students who have just come out the other side of the application process or even academics at your chosen university, they really know what it will take to get your application over the finish line.

# SEREN ACADEMY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

**The Seren Academy Conference is a virtual event not to be missed, bringing you and hundreds of other Seren learners together with top academics, university representatives and Seren Graduates for a jam-packed programme of in-depth learning, inspirational insights and invaluable advice, exclusive to year 12 Seren Academy learners!**

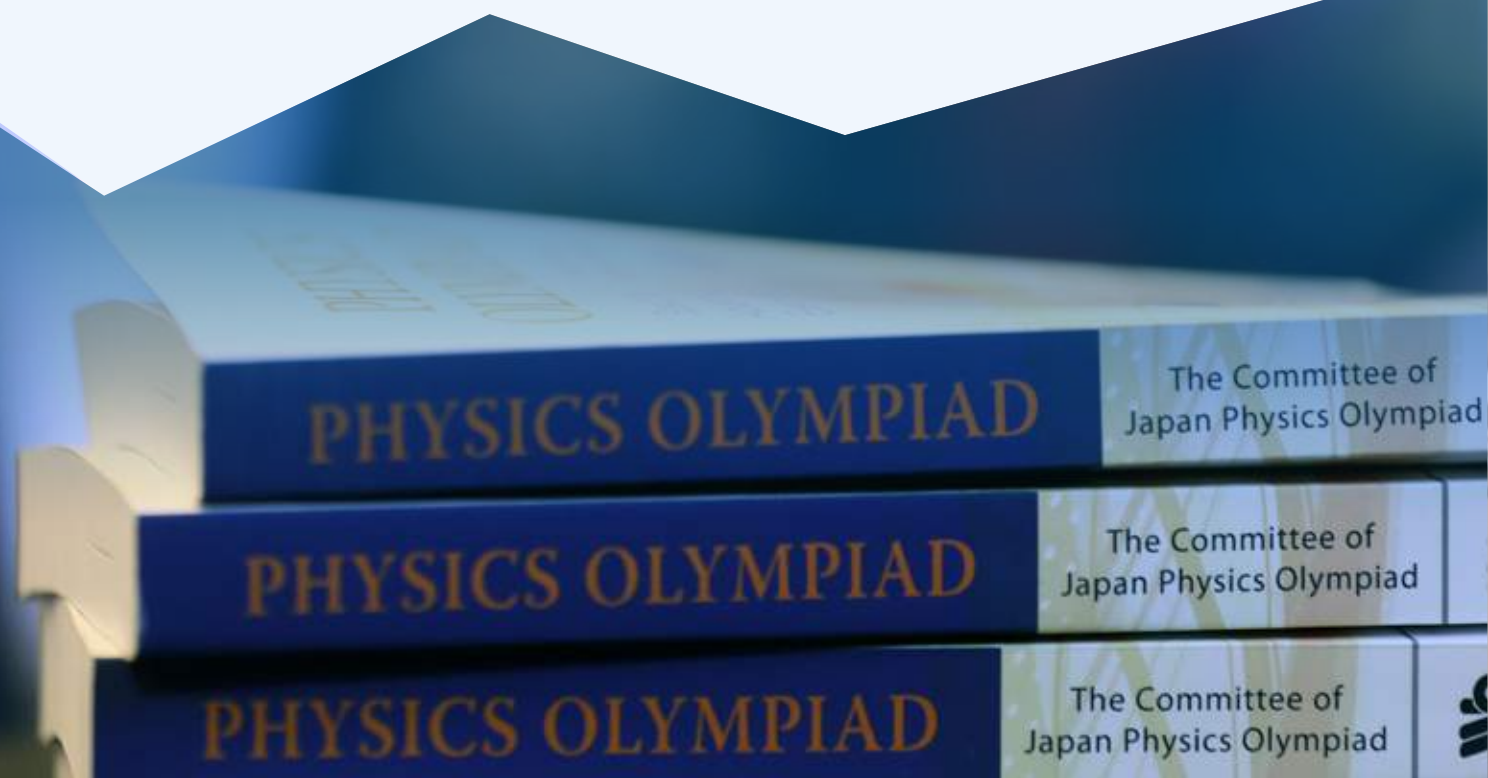
During this inspirational event, you will get to take part in insightful subject specific workshops, informative guidance sessions, challenging undergraduate level masterclasses and helpful Q&As with experts from leading universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, Aberystwyth, Cardiff, Durham and Exeter. You will also get the opportunity to visit a range of virtual exhibition stands from universities in both the UK and overseas.

The conference gives you the perfect opportunity to delve deeper into the subjects you are interested in and develop your knowledge, while discovering more about the various study paths open to you, including Oxbridge and international courses.

You will receive invaluable advice and guidance on everything from choosing degrees and making your university applications stand out, to understanding the admissions process and student finance. Sessions will also cover topics including plotting career paths, adjusting to university life, the opportunities for studying abroad and bursaries and scholarships. You will also hear first-hand from former Seren learners about what to expect from university and how to make the most out of it.

## Don't miss out!

Make sure you are registered with Seren Space to receive your invitation and the full details of the conference programme.





# HOW SEREN SHAPED MY ACADEMIC JOURNEY

*I joined the Seren programme in year 12 and it helped me in so many ways. I had always thought that attending a top university was out of my reach, but Seren shifted my mindset and gave me the confidence boost I needed to believe in myself.*

*“From the academic masterclasses to the guidance sessions and summer schools, Seren enabled me to explore exciting new subject areas that I didn’t study at school and gave me an insight into how undergraduates and lecturers at top UK universities articulate themselves. I developed skills including how to present and debate topics which I later put to use when it came to writing my personal statements, application letters and university essays.*

*“A highlight for me was the Sutton Trust summer school, which I was made aware of through Seren where I lived on-campus for a week at Cambridge University, attending lectures and seminars. It was here, where I completed a university-style project exploring maths at a deeper level, that I decided I wanted to study the subject. I’m currently in my second year of studying Maths and Education at Durham university and couldn’t be happier!*

*“My advice to Seren learners would be to grasp every opportunity, even if you don’t think a particular session or summer school will be relevant to your personal goals. Open mindedness is key.*

## Molly Rowlands

Seren Graduate  
Maths and Education Studies at Durham University



# ACADEMY SUMMER SCHOOLS

**In partnership with Jesus College Oxford, Seren Academy learners get the opportunity to take part in our prestigious summer school programme.**

These are life-changing experiences designed to give you a unique and unrivalled chance to experience undergraduate-level study.

Comprising of an extensive mix of challenging lectures, seminars, tutorials, essays and reflective sessions, the summer schools will deepen your knowledge and enrich your studies.

The summer schools have helped inspire, motivate and shape the ambitions of many Seren learners, with previous attendees now studying at leading universities around the world, including Oxford, Cambridge, Yale, Harvard, Stanford, and Chicago.

**Two summer schools are available to Academy learners:**

- **Seren International Online summer school**
- **Jesus College, Oxford residential summer school**

**How do I apply for the Seren summer school opportunities?**

Each summer school is highly competitive, but everyone has the potential to make a successful application. Places are offered based on an exceptional personal statement and demonstration of ambition and academic ability. When applications are open, you will be informed on Seren Space and provided with all the information required.





# UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD SEREN-JESUS RESIDENTIAL SUMMER SCHOOL

**Hosted by Jesus College, this summer school is a flagship event in the Seren Academy calendar. It is an exclusive opportunity for year 12 Seren learners to get a first-hand, authentic taste of life and study at a world-class university.**

While the summer school takes place at the renowned Jesus College, giving you an insight into the University of Oxford's famous tutoring system, it is not just for those of you interested in applying to Oxford or Cambridge. Regardless of where you are hoping to study, it will give you the experience, skills and knowledge to help you make the best-informed decision for your own future and prepare you for higher level education. You might not have the confidence to apply to a world leading university and this summer school aims to give you the self-belief that you have the potential to apply anywhere.

## What you can expect

You will spend five days taking part in a mix of lectures, seminars, tutorials, mentoring sessions and essay writing aimed at developing your skills and interests while helping you understand how to put together a competitive university application.

You will stay in the College's halls, eat in the historic dining hall and study in university lecture theatres just like an undergraduate. You will also enjoy social time relaxing in the serene courtyards, making friends, joining college tours and exploring the city, including visits to the Sheldonian theatre and the Ashmolean and History of Science museums.

## What's on the timetable?

Be prepared for a busy and challenging, but incredibly stimulating week! This experience is designed to push you outside of your intellectual comfort zone. You will be expected to read academic articles and journals before and during the summer school and are encouraged to do your own research to find other relevant readings.

“One of the most pleasing things to see on this summer school is when a young person who feels unconfident and like they don't belong at the beginning of the week starts to come out of their shell, starts speaking up in the lectures, engages in the tutorials, and then by the end of the week they walk tall. They feel like they deserve to be here alongside their peers, and that they have what it takes to apply to the best universities. We know that participants on these summer schools become more confident, empowered, and have more of the skills needed to make competitive applications to the leading universities of their choice. Please apply to the 2023 online and residential summer schools and see where it can take you.”

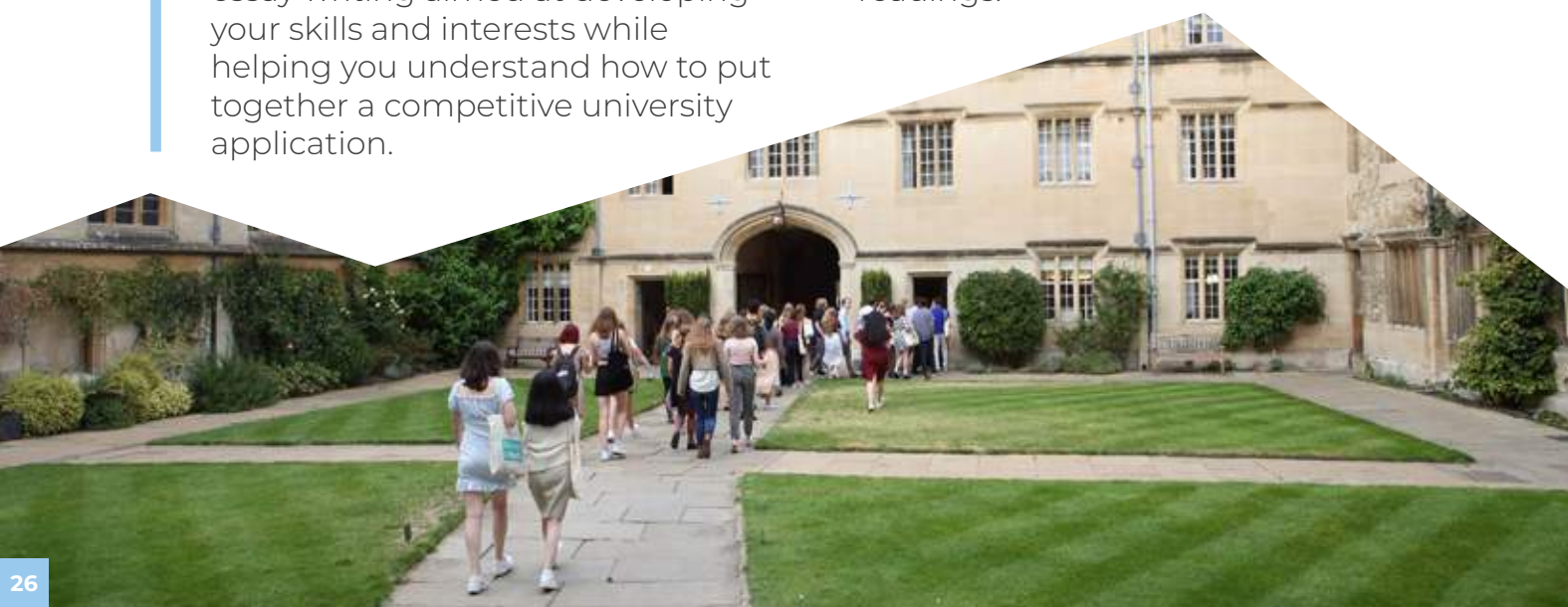
**Matthew Williams**

Access Fellow at Jesus College Oxford

“Before attending the summer school, my mind was full of the pretty negative pre-conceptions that many of us Welsh students have about Oxford; 'it's too posh' or 'I won't be able to keep up with the highly academic discussions'. But the brilliantly kind tutors and student ambassadors at Jesus College flipped that mindset on its head. The week really challenged what I thought was expected of an Oxbridge applicant and student. From interdisciplinary lectures to more concentrated seminars, I was given invaluable skills such as how to break down essay questions to provide a new angle, or how to approach an obscure interview question. Skills that will make my application stand out regardless of which university I want to attend.”

**Owain Siôn**

Seren Academy learner





“Being part of Seren completely reframed my thinking of what was accessible.”

**Bethany Wisdom**  
Seren Graduate  
Second year English and  
Education student at  
Bryn Mawr College,  
Philadelphia

## A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

**I had never considered studying abroad until Seren told me about the Fulbright Commission's Sutton Trust US programme - a project linking bright state school learners with US universities.**

Through the programme, I spent a week at a UK university during the Easter holidays learning about American universities and how the education system differs from the UK. During a second residential programme in Boston, I experienced the American liberal arts system, which enables you to study multiple subjects rather than just one, and absolutely loved it. While I was there, I remember thinking 'I have to make this happen.'

Little did I know that two years later I would be studying English with a minor in Education at Philadelphia's prestigious Bryn Mawr College. Its liberal arts system means I'm able to explore other topics while working towards my degree, including French, classics and political science.

I was attracted to Bryn Mawr due to its strong historical links to Wales and

Seren gave me the confidence to apply. As well as helping me decide where to study, Seren also helped me decide what to study. I took advantage of academic-led English talks, which introduced me to new areas like linguistics and literary theory, fuelling my love of the subject. I also received support with interviews and personal statement writing.

Moving abroad is a big decision but my experiences through Seren helped me see what it could be like before making the leap. I'm now in my second year and love it. Seeing the Welsh flag flying for the Mayday celebrations made me so happy - to be in a place so far from home, yet feel connected, was special.

I am so thankful to Seren for broadening my outlook - getting involved in the US programme has been truly life changing.

## SEREN INTERNATIONAL ONLINE SUMMER SCHOOL

**Hailed by Jesus College, Oxford as its most expansive summer school, this opportunity is a demanding two-week online study experience designed to introduce you to the critical ways of thinking required in higher education both here and abroad.**

The summer school has a strong international focus, with instructors from top universities across the globe including Singapore and universities in the United States and Europe. There will be talks focused on studying internationally.

Devised in collaboration with Jesus College Oxford and Equal Education Partners, the summer school is delivered by world-leading academics, experts, Seren Graduates and university undergraduates representing esteemed universities from around the globe.

You can select a stream suited to your academic interests and

immerse yourself in an extensive timetable of seminars, lectures, and masterclasses structured around four capstone subject areas:

- Humanities
- Maths, Physics and Life Sciences
- Medicine and Biomedical Sciences
- Social Sciences and Law

You will work on a project related to your chosen subject and have the chance to present your final assignment to a panel of eminent professionals and Welsh Government officials - an achievement to include in your personal statement!

An informative range of Q&A sessions allows you to talk with Seren Graduates and university undergraduates who will provide a unique insight into university life, and a first-hand perspective about applications, scholarships, and the opportunities available to you in Wales, the UK and overseas.





# SEREN SPACE

**Introducing ‘Seren Space’ – a brand new online portal and app designed to make your journey through Seren easier. This handy tool will be your go to place to keep up to date with everything on the programme!**

This is a brand new portal being rolled out this term, it will only be open to **year 12 Seren Academy learners** to begin with.

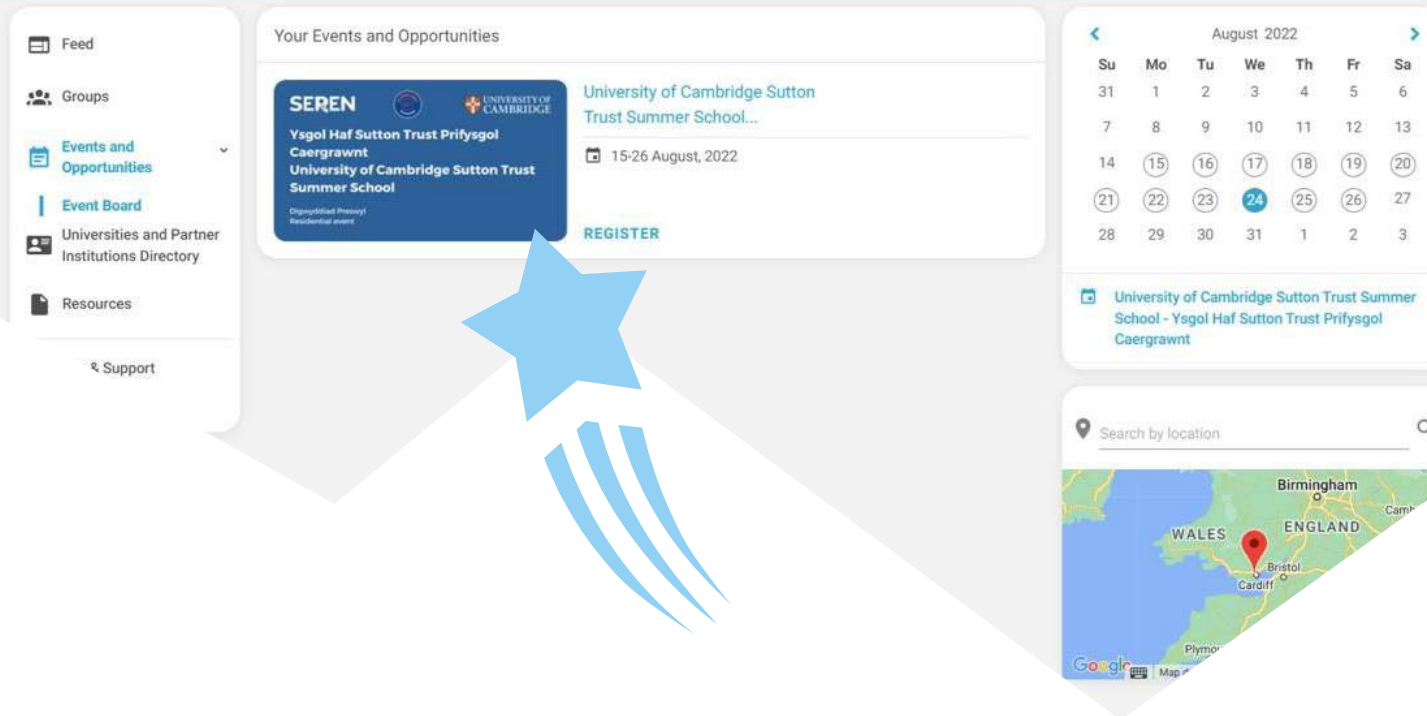
**Feed** – Your main ‘home screen’ on the portal, this is where you will find all the latest Seren news and information on events and opportunities that are relevant to you based on your year group, subject preferences and regional hub. You will see posts from Seren directly informing you about national offerings, as well as content from your regional hub coordinator letting you know about things happening in your area.

**Mentoring** – A place for Seren Academy learners to access mentoring. Get matched with a mentor who is studying a course you are interested in, or who is at a university you aspire to join. Discover our mentoring programmes such as the Seren International Study and the Seren Oxbridge Mentoring schemes.

**Groups** – ‘Groups’ offer a quick and easy way for you to keep up with everything that’s available to your Seren year, the latest events in your particular region, and the various opportunities on offer in your subject or career area of choice!



SEREN



**Events and Opportunities** – Here you will be able to browse for events and opportunities that interest you, register your attendance, contact the host with any queries you might have or use the map to see what’s happening in your region. Information on events relevant to you will also be shared by Seren Space directly to the inbox of the email address that you signed up to the portal with.

**University/Partners** – Find out more about all the universities and partner organisations that we work with at

Seren. You will find a summary on each university and organisation, links to their websites and contact details for a representative in case you would like to reach out to them.

**Resources** – Find everything from revision guides and university application advice to mock lectures, insights from Seren Graduates, and more to help you with every stage of your academic journey.

## Don't forget!

As well as being open to Seren learners, Seren Space is also open to teachers and tutors, and parents and carers, keeping you up to date and informed about all the opportunities and resources Seren Space has available to ensure our Seren learners don't miss out!





**Daniel Jack Smith**  
Seren Graduate  
Medicine at Newcastle  
University

## SEREN GRADUATES

**When a learner graduates from the Seren Academy at the end of year 13, they become a Seren Graduate.**

Since 2016, thousands of learners have graduated from Seren with outstanding A level results before heading off to world leading universities.

They didn't achieve their success overnight. They put in lots of hard work, dedication, trial and error. They grabbed every opportunity and remained motivated to aim high and achieve their goals. YOU can do the same.

Many of our Seren Graduates continue to support Seren and return as mentors and summer school teaching assistants to share their experiences and insights. We hope when you graduate from Seren, you'll do the same too!

*"Seren has supported my goal of becoming a doctor. I joined Seren's North Wales medics programme, run in conjunction with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, which provides aspiring medics with work experience and advice. It was a brilliant programme led by relatable young doctors who provided inspiring talks and guidance. I took part in medicine activities and gained real-life experience with a patient, which I referenced in my university applications.*

*Seren helped me prepare for my interviews and admissions tests*

*and I achieved a much higher score than I ever imagined. I also attended a University of Oxford conference where students and lecturers shared their top advice, which was really helpful. I used to be reserved about applying to leading universities, but Seren broke down those barriers and showed me it doesn't matter where you come from - with the right help and guidance, you can reach your potential."*

**Daniel Jack Smith**  
Seren Graduate  
Medicine at Newcastle University

**"Seren showed me that I am smart enough and I am good enough."**

**Mimi Nanud**  
Seren Graduate  
History at the University of Oxford



**"After changing my mind about studying musical theatre at a performing arts college, Seren showed me the alternative options available to me and inspired me to apply for Oxbridge."**

*Through Seren, I took part in a mentoring programme which paired me up with a history undergraduate at the University of Oxford. She provided insights into what it's like as a student there including what I could expect from a history degree and how my daily academic and social schedule might look. I was able to go to her for advice on everything from course information to writing my application.*

*Last summer, I attended the Seren-Jesus College residential summer school where I joined a week of lectures, getting a further flavour of life as an Oxford student. It was truly some of the best days of my life. The tutorials challenged my thoughts and developed my skills including critical thinking. I also spoke with current Oxford students and attended a formal dinner at New College which was great!*

*I remember worrying if I would make any friends, but I felt so welcome the second I arrived. Being surrounded by like-minded learners from Wales was a turning point. Although I had already decided to apply to Oxford, being there made me realise it was somewhere I could be, that I am smart enough and good enough.*

*I have now set to study history there in September and will be the first person in my immediate family to go to university. I am very grateful for Seren's support as none of this would have happened otherwise. Seren gave me the skills, experience and confidence to apply for Oxford and helped me realise your background or hometown does not matter when applying - it is your ability, commitment and passion that does."*



**“I want to thank Seren for everything it has done for me. I am set to study medicine at Cardiff University and am convinced this never would have happened without Seren’s help. I took part in Seren’s medics programme, the genomics cafe, Seren Award and lectures from many universities.**

**Seren has enabled me to achieve my academic potential and has made me realise I am not disadvantaged by where I live or coming from a state education - the world is my oyster as long as I work hard and take every opportunity. I’m not exaggerating when I say Seren has changed my life. Its support has helped so many kids like me achieve things they never thought possible. ”**

**Luke Reardon** Seren Graduate studying at Cardiff University

**“Seren has really opened up my mind to opportunities I didn’t previously know about. Through Seren, I got to visit the University of Oxford, which was a dream come true. When I was there, I got to see laboratories doing real-life experiments, watching how atoms react using the university’s state-of-the-art equipment. I would love to study at Oxford one day and look forward to applying there in the future. I encourage other Seren learners to try all opportunities available. Seren is a pathway to success that should be embraced. ”**

**Daniella Nakazzi** a Seren Foundation learner

**“We were delighted when Rosa was chosen to join Seren as we knew it would offer her some great opportunities. Seren built her confidence and gave her the motivation to follow her dreams. Attending Seren’s Jesus College summer school helped her see that lots of people like her go on to universities like Oxford, showing her there was no reason she shouldn’t be able to as well as she was just as good. I’d definitely encourage learners and parents to make the most of Seren. Remember that no matter how gifted your child is, they can’t do it alone. ”**

**Catrin Evans** parent of Seren Graduate, Rosa Humphreys

**Daniella Nakazzi**  
Seren Foundation  
learner

## COLLABORATING WITH KEY PARTNERS

**Seren works with some of the best universities, organisations and education providers in Wales, the UK and overseas. Each of them shares Seren’s commitment and passion to help young people aim high and achieve their ambitions of studying at leading universities.**

Our partners help us to deliver exceptional opportunities for you, from academic masterclasses and unique study experiences to skill and confidence boosting extra-curricular activities. Here are just a few of those world-class institutions and organisations...

### Universities and Colleges

- University of Oxford – Jesus College, New College, St Catherine’s College
- University of Cambridge – Churchill College, Sidney Sussex College, Trinity College, Magdalene College
- Aberystwyth University
- Aberystwyth School of Veterinary Science
- Bangor University
- Cardiff University
- Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol
- Kings College London
- Swansea University
- The Open University Cymru
- University of Bath
- University of Bristol
- University College London
- University of Exeter
- University of Southampton
- University of Wales Trinity St David
- Wrexham Glyndwr University

### Professional and educational organisations

- British Physics Olympiad (BPhO)
- The Brilliant Club
- Equal Education Partners
- Further Mathematics Support Programme Wales
- Lord Edmund Davies Legal Education Trust (LEDLET) and Legal Wales
- Medic Mentors
- MFL Mentoring Cymru
- Routes into Languages Cymru
- Royal College of General Practitioners
- Royal Veterinary College
- The Social Mobility Foundation
- STEMHaus
- Zero Gravity

### Global universities and institutions

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Yale University Undergraduate Admissions
- Yale-NUS
- University of Florida

**We are also proud to work with the US-UK Fulbright Commission and the Sutton Trust - organisations that work together to deliver opportunities for you to study in the United States.**

Go to page 28 to read how one Seren learner’s dream of studying in the US was realised after securing a place on a four-year course at Bryn Mawr College in Philadelphia.



# A WORD FROM OUR PARTNERS ...



2021-22 was a super year for the connection between Wales and Cambridge, as we welcomed new Welsh students to the university, delivered a range of initiatives with Seren, and hosted Wales's Minister for Education to discuss our work in supporting Welsh applicants. We hope 2022-23 will be even better, as we regrow in-person engagements alongside sustaining our substantial online Seren offering of presentations, workshops, and Q&A sessions. We have just launched an 'Applying to Cambridge' from Wales webpage, which should provide a great starting point for this year's school and college learners.

**Dr Jonathan Padley**  
Fellow, Admissions Tutor,  
and Tutor, Churchill College  
University of Cambridge

We are delighted to be working alongside Seren again in 2023 in support of the wonderful enrichment opportunities that we can offer to learners in collaboration with other UK universities, colleges and schools. We already provide learners with access to some of our experts through super curricular activities that get right under the skin of their chosen subjects. We are thrilled to have hosted a very successful summer school for Seren learners in 2022 where we explored issues around climate literacy and how future generations can effectively share their concerns and insights into some of the greatest global challenges of the twenty first century. We are continuing to develop our veterinary and nursing provisions and hope to open these up to the stars of the future through Seren.

**Professor Anwen Jones**  
Pro Vice-Chancellor  
Aberystwyth University

We have worked in partnership with Seren Foundation for over four years organising modern language events for year 8 and 9 learners to spark their curiosity about languages and the wide-ranging career paths open to them. We have collaborated with Jesus College Oxford to deliver the event, and have been offered an exciting programme of virtual activities and competitions. Q&A sessions with Routes Cymru and Oxford University ambassadors have been invaluable, providing young learners with real-life role models. They help raise their aspirations as they learn that university can be for everybody from all backgrounds and begin thinking about their journey applying for Oxbridge or Russell Groups in the future.

**Meleri Jenkins**  
Project Coordinator, Routes  
into Languages Cymru

We are delighted to partner with Seren to promote the opportunity for Welsh teenagers to study in the United States. We are very proud of the learners who have gained places through our programme in partnership with the Sutton Trust, but also of our wider work through EducationUSA where we offer free, unbiased advice and events about US study to help more people have this chance. Seren has been an incredible way for young people to connect with us and we look forward to continuing to help learners explore US study!

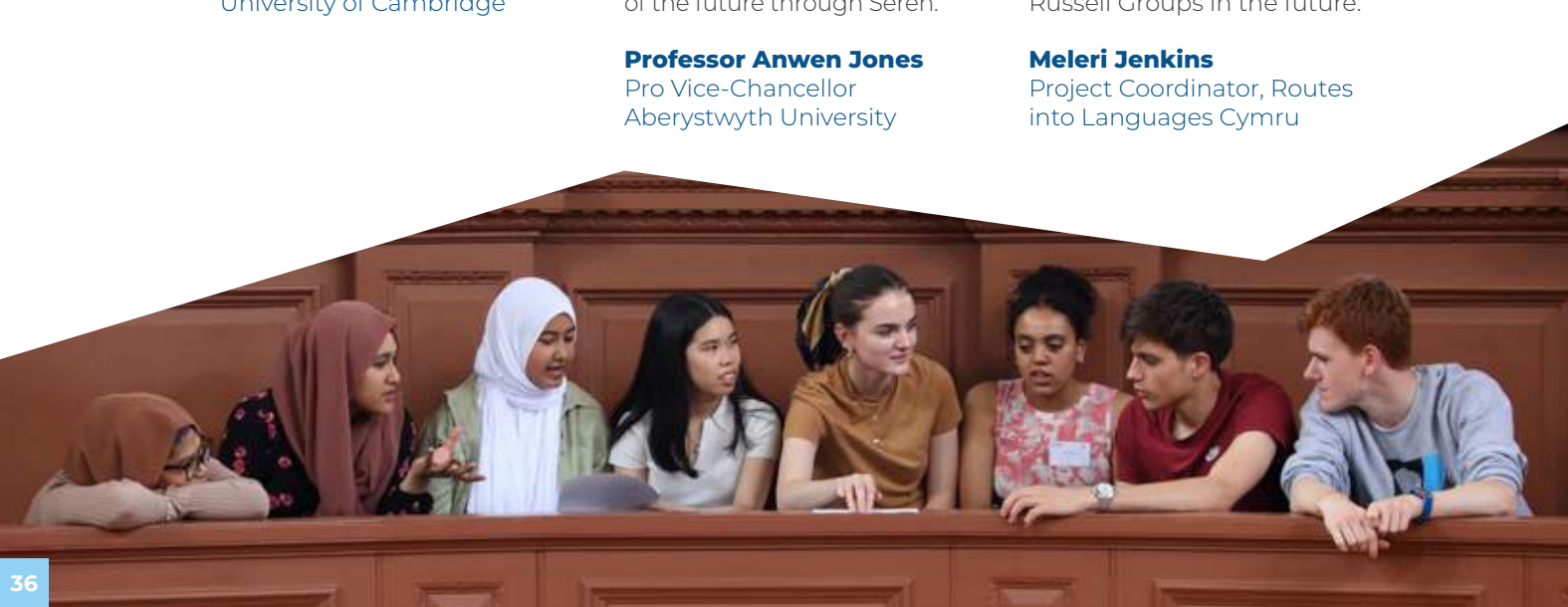
**Rowena Boddington**  
Director of Advising  
and Marketing  
US-UK Fulbright  
Commission

The Sutton Trust supports high attaining learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to access leading universities and careers, helping them explore study opportunities and make successful applications. We run several programmes in partnership with Cardiff University. We also have opportunities for Welsh learners outside of Wales including our summer schools; US programme; Pathways to Professions programmes, which cover careers including law, consulting, and banking and finance; as well as further digital support through Sutton Trust online. We are grateful for our relationship with Seren, which has led many Welsh learners into leading universities in both the UK and United States.

**Laura Bruce**  
Director of Programmes at  
the Sutton Trust

The University of Bath is a proud supporter of Seren and we're extremely pleased to be working together to support learners across Wales. The skills learners need to study at university are broad and it's great to have a programme that prepares them for the wider range of experiences they will have. We very much value the work the learners do as part of the Seren Award and in recognition of this, offer suitable applicants an alternative offer to study at Bath if they get a first or upper second class in their project.

**Dr Andrew Ross**  
Head of Widening Access  
and Participation, University  
of Bath







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REACH FOR THE STARS