Welcome to the Autumn newsletter from the Centre for Philanthropy at the University of Kent. The new academic year has begun well, with ever-increasing numbers of students taking our undergraduate courses on 'Volunteering' and 'Social Justice Practice' and welcoming Masters students taking the 'Civil Society, NGO and Non-Profit Studies' course, within which we teach a module on 'Fundraising and Philanthropy'.

Our commitment to achieving impact with our research has also kept us busy. We have given presentations at the Red Cross, Oxfam, community foundations in Scotland, Newcastle and Bristol, as well as speaking at local charity events including the Medway Funding conference. We have also made numerous media appearances including Radio 4’s Moral Maze, BBC Radio 5’s Saturday Breakfast, The Guardian and Kent on Sunday.

We’d love to hear your thoughts on our work, so please don’t hesitate to contact us on philanthropy@kent.ac.uk.
Celebrating 5 years of the Centre for Philanthropy

We celebrated our fifth anniversary in October with around 100 guests from charities, academia and others who have been supportive since our founding in 2008. The reception was held in the stunning Colyer-Fergusson Music Building, a new and entirely philanthropically-funded facility at the University of Kent’s Canterbury campus. In her speech at the event our Vice-Chancellor Professor Dame Julia Goodfellow, congratulated all involved with the Centre for producing “high quality research that is useful to people in the philanthropy sector, including charity leaders, fundraisers, donors and policy makers”.

A short document depicting the Centre’s key activities and achievements from 2008-2013, which include attracting a wide range of funding, producing over 20 published outputs, expanding the team to recruit a new colleague Dr Eddy Hogg, achieving widespread media coverage and having a useful impact on the UK charity sector, is available here.

New book draws on extensive research with wealthy donors to explain why rich people give

In September, the Centre’s director, Beth Breeze launched her new book, co-authored with Theresa Lloyd: ‘Richer Lives: Why Rich People Give’. It contains an in-depth study of what drives rich people to give to charity, how they choose what causes to support, their methods of giving and their views on fundraisers and philanthropy advisers. It also includes a review of developments in the wider UK philanthropic sector, and an exploratory chapter on why some rich people don’t give. The findings are based on interviews and surveys with 82 wealthy UK donors - 40 of whom originally took part in a study about their philanthropic activities ten years ago and 42 wealthy donors who have emerged over the past decade. The book concludes with a series of recommendations addressed to government, charities, philanthropists and advisers on how to further develop the sector. Coutts Bank kindly hosted the launch of the book at their headquarters in London, and Beth and Theresa have undertaken extensive dissemination work over the Autumn, speaking at events and writing media articles to ensure the findings reach the widest possible audience.

‘Richer Lives: why rich people give’ was generously supported by the Pears Foundation. It is available to purchase for £15 here - all profits from sales of the book will be put towards further research in this area.
Our Million Pound Donors Report goes global

Since 2008 we have published an annual report detailing the number and distribution of donations made by UK donors or given to UK-based organisations, that are worth £1 million or more. The report also contains case studies of those who give and receive 7-figure gifts. The 2013 edition, published in November, saw the UK data joined by similar studies conducted in 5 other countries and regions: the USA, Russia, China, Hong Kong and the Middle East.

We found that top-level philanthropy in the UK is buoyant, as we identified 197 separate ‘million pound donations’ made in the UK in 2012, whose total value at £1.35 billion represents not only a 9% year-on-year increase from the previous year but also the highest level since the financial crisis of 2008/09.

The UK Million Pound Donor Report continues to be researched here at the University of Kent, and the global report, focused on donations worth $1 million or more, is produced by colleagues in the Center of Philanthropy at Indiana University, USA. We congratulate them and thank the report’s funder, Coutts bank, for their ongoing support for this important project.

The full report can be downloaded here.

Keep up to date with the latest news and developments for Centre for Philanthropy.

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