

Fundraising

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MAGAZINE

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under 35

The future is bright for our biennial list
of outstanding young fundraisers

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Bright Future

Our biennial list of outstanding young fundraisers offers hope in troubled times

Perhaps at this time more than ever, youth in the sector needs to be celebrated. The future is uncertain and the effects of the continuing pandemic are likely to be long-lasting. This year's 25 Under 35 list hopefully goes some way to shining a light on those professionals who will help lead the sector through this crisis and beyond.

Katherine Woods, one of this year's judges and partnership development lead at Action for Children, says: "I was impressed to see how fundraisers from organisations of all sizes have dug deep to find renewed energy and go above and beyond for their teams and their beneficiaries during such a challenging time. It is heartening to see fundraising's rising stars displaying a passion for innovation, diversity and true leadership."

In total we received 109 completed nominations during the online application process which we ran through May. The standard of the nominations this year was incredibly high, and after many hours deliberation we narrowed it down to a shortlist of 40, based in part on the following criteria:

- Has this person gone above and beyond the demands of their day job?
- Have they shown commitment to the sector?
- Have they shown innovation and original thinking?
- Have they introduced or created new processes or products that have helped their organisation to fundraise?
- Have they exceeded targets and expectations?

The judges then individually selected their 25 and we amalgamated the results to produce the final list.

Lisa Okawa, senior corporate partnerships manager at the Prince's Trust and judge, says: "I was absolutely blown away by the nominees and particularly impressed by their leadership and commitment to the causes they believe in. I hope we can all celebrate these talented fundraisers for the invaluable difference they make in their roles."

The shortened profiles listed here may not do complete justice to the achievements of those selected to the final 25 but hopefully it will give some indication of their abilities and the exceptional level of young talent in fundraising.

Meet the judges



Claire Rowney

Executive director of fundraising, marketing and communications, Macmillan Cancer Support



Ikhliah Hussain

Head of philanthropy and partnerships, Orphans In Need



Katherine Woods

Partnership development lead, Action for Children



Lisa Okawa

Senior corporate partnerships manager, Prince's Trust



Liz Tait

Outgoing director of fundraising, Teenage Cancer Trust



Alana Tubasei

Head of philanthropy, University of Edinburgh

Anthony McDermott (34)
Head of marketing, challenge events and corporate relationships, St Benedict's Hospice

Anthony McDermott joined St Benedict's Hospice in 2018 as a corporate fundraiser. It was his first fundraising role after a career in the army and sales. Since joining, he has played a key part in growing the hospice's fundraising income from £400,000 to £1.1m in two years. He now manages all of the hospice's marketing, and increased social media traffic by a large percentage, including adding over 3,000 organic likes to the charity's Facebook page. He secured the support of various corporates and celebrities, including the England World Cup team. He also introduced a number of activities, for example, creating the charity's first mascot, Benedict Bear, which he plays himself. He also launched a biscuit-making contest that involved 100 schools, took a team of fundraisers on a trek along the Great Wall of China, which raised £80,000, and created a gin for the charity's 35th anniversary.

Rebecca Wilson (27)
Engagement officer, Lucy Air Ambulance for Children

At Lucy Air Ambulance for Children, Rebecca Wilson works on a wide range of different fundraising channels, from trusts and foundations to individual giving and challenge events. She also supports corporate and events fundraising. Despite only being able to dedicate a third of her time to trusts and foundations, she streamlined the application and reporting process and achieved record ROI. She also manages relationships with the families helped by the charity and was the driving force behind a 50% increase in fundraising from them last year. She devised, planned and delivered the charity's new Comedy Night event at the London Comedy

Store, which raised £5,000, and supported a virtual corporate fundraising event that raised £50,000 in two hours. She also manages the charity's social media and website, which she reworked and used to launch an emergency coronavirus appeal.

Ellie Green (26)
Philanthropy manager, Marie Curie

Ellie Green manages a portfolio of trusts and major donors for Marie Curie, providing stewardship, negotiating gifts and recruiting new supporters. Since she joined in 2018 she has increased giving by £328,000, and earlier this year she raised £700,000 in eight weeks for Marie Curie's coronavirus emergency appeals. She recently secured a six-figure gift, involving Marie Curie's chief executive and director of strategy, briefing them, leading the solicitation and going from first donor meeting to major contribution in just four months. She has also been working on improving stewardship and thanking processes for donors. Under her management, Marie Curie's Small Trust Mailing programme grew by 30% in a year. During lockdown, she has volunteered to do some of her working days at the reception desk of Marie Curie's hospice in Hampstead, which was short-staffed because of the crisis. As a result of her hard work, she has recently been promoted to the role of philanthropy manager.



Anthony McDermott

Helen Bowie Wheeler (30)
Legacy development manager, Moorfields Eye Charity

A professional fundraiser since 2012, Helen Bowie Wheeler currently specialises in legacies. Under her leadership, Moorfields Eye Charity's legacy programme

grew its enquirer pool by around 25% and its pledger pool by 35% in 2019-20. In 2019, she set up the Moorfields Visionaries Circle as part of the charity's legacy stewardship programme. The circle aimed at recruiting 25 members among donors who had pledged a legacy to the charity. Some 44 members joined, and Bowie Wheeler successfully delivered two events. One of the members made an unprompted donation of £1,000 to the charity, citing communication with Bowie Wheeler as the reason for the gift. She also launched the charity's first social media legacy campaign and introduced legacy messaging on site at Moorfields Eye Hospital. She constantly champions legacies across the charity, working collaboratively with other fundraising teams to integrate legacies in all communications.

Martha Awojobi (27)
Former corporate partnerships senior executive, Refuge, now consultant

Martha Awojobi began her career in face-to-face fundraising in 2011. She has been focusing

on corporate fundraising since 2017 for West London Mission and Refuge, where all the accounts she has managed have met or exceeded their income targets. This included a campaign that raised £70,000 through Crowdfund London.



Martha Awojobi



Helen Bowie Wheeler



Ellie Green

"This is a fantastic reminder of the amazing community that we work in, and the great lengths that fundraisers go to for their charities" LIZ TAIT

to start a new corporate fundraising role in the arts and culture sector, but this didn't materialise due to a lack of funding. She has now started her own fundraising consultancy and has been appointed to curate the first black Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) fundraising conference, as well as providing free fundraising support for BAME-led organisations.

Marja Moller (32)

Digital fundraising advertising manager, Shelter

Marja Moller has been working on digital marketing for Shelter for four years. She covers digital marketing planning, testing, delivery and support for all fundraising and product launches, delivering campaigns for other areas of Shelter's 100-strong fundraising team. Her work on paid social and programmatic advertising



channels led to an increase in individual giving income by more than £400,000. She helped Shelter to reach new audiences by pioneering digital audio advertising, for example on Spotify, and by diversifying creative content. In 2019, she led the digital side of Shelter's Christmas appeal, scaling up digital as the main delivery channel after the charity decided not to use Direct TV in the campaign. The appeal ended

up raising £1.8m. As well as contributing to other teams' campaigns, she directly launched Level Up for Shelter, the charity's gaming for good product. She also manages relationships with external agencies and suppliers and contributes to budget forecasting using attribution data.

Chris Malla (27)

Individual giving coordinator, Trees for Cities

Chris Malla manages Trees for Cities' individual giving programme, which had only recently launched when he joined in 2018. He has since expanded it considerably. He launched a range of new income channels, including merchandise, challenge events, digital campaigns, direct debits and podcast advertising. He created #TeamTrees, the charity's challenge events team, and constantly supports and stewards them. He worked

on introducing the charity's fundraising materials, which included seed packets for new supporters, who are encouraged to plant them and keep in touch with the organisation. As a result, the charity's individual giving income more than tripled, going from £61,000 to £209,000 in a single year, which also saw a more than five-fold increase in website donations and a doubling of direct debit income. He is now setting up the charity's first legacy

worked as a foundations manager for Unicef UK, where she raised £550,000 in 18 months, and was the first fundraising manager at Teach A Man To Fish, where her fundraising strategy resulted in a 31% growth in income. Outside of her main role, she provided a year of mentoring to a fellow fundraiser at prison rehabilitation charity Switchback, is a literacy volunteer at the Hackney Pirates, and is a long-standing trustee at the education charity Yes Futures.

"It was tremendously inspiring to see the talent and ongoing dedication to philanthropy and making change happen across the fundraising sector" ALANA TUBASEI

programme. Malla also gets involved in fundraising outside working hours, by attending events in schools and organising and playing at music gigs, with proceeds going to Trees for Cities.

Rachel Knight (33)

Head of trusts and new markets, ActionAid UK

Rachel Knight manages a team of five responsible for raising £4.3m a year for ActionAid UK. She manages relationships with high-value grantmakers and foundation donors, and also focuses on developing new funding opportunities for the charity. A specialist in international development, she joined ActionAid UK in 2016 as foundation partnerships manager and was promoted twice in two years. She developed a new strategy to support expansion into overseas markets, which resulted in multi-year grants worth £1.1m. She previously

Francesca D'Arcy (32) **Community fundraiser, Nugent**

Francesca D'Arcy began fundraising at the age of nine, and before becoming a professional fundraiser she had already raised £60,000 for local causes. She started her career in 2011 as a community fundraiser at Alzheimer's Society, where she organised the first Memory Walk at Aintree Racecourse in 2012. The walk raised £60,000 in 2013 and was then developed into a nationwide flagship event that still takes place every year. In 2018, she worked as a community fundraising manager for Clatterbridge Cancer Charity, supporting the campaign to raise funds for the Clatterbridge Cancer Hospital Development in Liverpool. She managed corporate partnerships and worked on promoting the community build of a LEGO replica of the hospital. As a fundraising officer for Nugent, in 2017 she helped devise, organise and host the charity's Strictly Nugent event, which raised £25,000. She also regularly appears on local radio and other media outlets, raising awareness of events and encouraging fundraising.



Camille St-Omer Donaldson (28)

Supporter experience project lead, British Red Cross

Camille St-Omer Donaldson is part of a new team that aims to transform the British Red Cross' fundraising, putting supporter experience at its heart. She works on redesigning supporter journeys, using insight, and driven by supporter needs to improve their experience and increase loyalty. She started as a telephone fundraiser in 2012 and has been at the BRC since 2016, where she initially worked on quality control and fundraising compliance. She has recently been involved in supporting the organisation's fundraising in response to the coronavirus crisis as well as its BAME-network-led, Covid-19 and BAME communities action plan. She actively campaigns and works on tackling racism in the sector. She is ex co-chair of BRC's BAME diversity network, currently sitting on the committee, and recently hosted an event on understanding racism and allyship that saw more than 600 of the organisation's staff take part. She is also an organiser at campaigning group #CharitySoWhite and chairs the trustee training programme committee Beyond Suffrage, which works to increase the presence of women from ethnic minority backgrounds on charity boards.

Paul Davies (30)

Head of corporate partnerships, British Heart Foundation

Paul Davies leads a national team of 18 managers and over 50 field staff, which looks after all things corporate partnerships at British Heart Foundation. In 2019-20, his team delivered £6.5m, following year-on-year growth. He started his fundraising career at Macmillan in 2012, where, as a regional business manager, he secured £450,000 from new businesses in his first year. He joined BHF in 2016 as area



manager and was promoted twice in the following three years. In his first year as partnerships programme lead, he almost tripled income for his channels and developed the charity's "Saving lives today, saving lives tomorrow" campaign. In 2018, he worked on BHF's partnership strategy, exploring big data and technology to reinvent the way in which the BHF approached partnerships. As a result of this work, the Pioneering Partnerships programme was listed as one of the four critical factors in the delivery of BHF's strategy until 2030.

Robin Peake (34)

Director for supporters, Wycliffe Bible Translators

Robin Peake has been a professional fundraiser since 2012, focusing on small charities. As head of fundraising and communications at Innonista, he doubled the charity's income in four years. This included improving individual donor retention rates to 79% thanks to a new personalised approach to communications, the launch of two regular giving products, and doubling trust income in one year. He also ran the charity's major donors programme, which raised £146,000 in 2017, having started from £28,000 in 2013. In 2018, Peake joined Home For Good, where he renewed the charity's approach to appeals, more than doubling ROI, secured its first seven-figure gift, and oversaw the trust fundraising programme, doubling income to £200,000. Peake recently joined Wycliffe Bible Translators after serving as a trustee of the charity for three years.



Laura Emmerson (34)

Head of the supporter management team, NSPCC

Laura Emmerson heads up a team of 13, leading on high-value stewardship, engagement events, communications, prospect research and due diligence. She works primarily with the NSPCC's major giving and partnerships functions, supporting around 60 fundraisers across the UK who are responsible for £20m income annually. More recently, she has stepped up to project manage the charity's Still Here for Children Appeal across all fundraising channels, which is raising millions for vulnerable children during lockdown. Earlier in her career, Emmerson secured six – and seven-figure gifts from international donors as a trusts fundraiser. She also worked on the IoF's 2011 ethical guidelines on the acceptance of major gifts, and led the fundraising campaign for the Women's Library @LSE.

Molly Simpson (26)

Events and community fundraising manager, St George's Hospital Charity

With just over three years professional fundraising experience, Molly Simpson has hit the ground running, exceeding her financial target in 2019/20 by £9,000 and developing a Christmas campaign which raised £25,000. She played a pivotal role in the launch and promotion of the hospital's coronavirus appeal, which raised nearly £300,000 in six weeks. She has the responsibility of coordinating all donations from the community, with the ongoing distribution of food and the daily delivery of 200 care packs to NHS staff in wards



and departments across two hospitals. Gift-in-kind value for these already exceeds £150,000. She also worked with two clinical consultants to bring Chinese New Year Celebrations to the hospital, with lion dances and traditional tea ceremonies. The event raised a modest £3,500, but has introduced the hospital to significant prospects from companies and major donors.

Lizzi Hollis (30)

Head of partnerships, Richard House Hospice

Despite being just 30, Lizzi Hollis has been a fundraiser for almost a decade. She has had stints with the Marine Conservation Society, Independent Age and St Mungo's homeless charity. At St Mungo's, she took a £10,000 per year partnership and turned it into a £130,000 plus per annum income stream within 18 months. In her current role, she has led her team



and Staffordshire area, bringing in a total of £440,000 against a budget of £290,000, and having hands-on stewardship with 56 individual giving supporters. One of these supporters runs an annual remote quiz, raising £16,000 in 2019 and still raising over £12,000 in March this year despite the Covid-19 crisis. Kawa also worked with the Birmingham Botanical Gardens last year, advising, orchestrating and facilitating an event with over 50 VIP guests. She was the only fundraising manager at Macmillan working in Birmingham during Q4 of 2019, covering for three team members. During this time, she was responsible for a total income of £418,000.

to promote awareness and fundraise for the charity in its 32 shops across Wales during Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Nasrullah Tahir (31)
Field development and operations manager, Islamic Relief Worldwide

Nasrullah Tahir is currently responsible for setting up fundraising operations in several countries where Islamic Relief Worldwide delivers programmes. For the last two years he has also been supporting the organisation's South Africa operation at a strategic level. Tahir works with grassroots volunteers to ensure that they truly believe in the causes and are inspired to

charity "would have had to sell its assets to fund operations". Hunter has secured six-figure funding from various sources including £100,000 from the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund and £150,000 from BBC Children in Need. She has also succeeded in securing funding of more than £300,000 from smaller trusts. She ran a digital campaign that raised £5,000 to combat holiday hunger during school holidays, and set up and ran sponsored sleep-out events where Newcastle University students and NHS staff raised over £5,000. As part of the charity's 170th anniversary celebrations, Hunter was instrumental in securing £6,000 in sponsorship and creating stands to exhibit the charity's work at an event.

Amy Hope (35)
Fundraising manager, Care for the Carers

Amy Hope's interest in charity started as a teenager, volunteering for a youth organisation before going on to complete a Master's degree

to increase corporate fundraising income from £350,000 to £520,000 in just over a year. She constantly goes out of her way to support those in the sector through mentoring and engaging in panels and discussion groups. She also founded Charity Women – an initiative to improve female seniority and leadership in the sector – speaking at conferences and other events to help drive forward efforts around diversity, inclusion and equality.

Jayna Kawa (32)
Regional fundraising manager (Birmingham), Macmillan Cancer Support

This September, Jayna Kawa will have been with Macmillan for two years, but she has over six years' professional experience in fundraising. In 2019, she was solely responsible for the individual giving line in the Birmingham, Black Country

"It is so nice to be reminded of the reasons to be optimistic about the future of fundraising" CLAIRE ROWNEY

Debbie Rowley (33)
Regional fundraising manager, North Wales, Tenovus Cancer Care

Debbie Rowley has been working in fundraising for nearly 12 years, starting as a fundraising assistant at Macmillan, then in a community fundraising role at Marie Curie. Almost seven years ago she joined the team at Tenovus Cancer Care as a community fundraiser, covering the North Wales region. Rowley has become the face of the charity in the region, driving corporate partnerships and community fundraising by identifying unique opportunities to increase income. Successes to date include a sheep-shearing challenge that raised £24,000 in one weekend and a partnership with Co-op

go above and beyond to deliver on activities to raise funds. The communities in which he works are often still learning about the concept of fundraising, so he develops a love for fundraising and ensures they are left with a habit of giving. One annual campaign in South Africa has increased revenue by more than £1m this year as a result of his involvement, raising £2.2m in 30 days alone.

Caitlin Hunter (25)
Fundraising officer, YMCA Newcastle

Caitlin Hunter joined YMCA Newcastle three years ago, and in that time has raised more than £850,000 from grants and donations. Her nomination states that without her, the

in voluntary action management. As a professional fundraiser, she has worked for national organisations such as Barnardo's, where she increased trust income in one geographical region by over 85%, and Childhood First where she helped to double trust income two years in a row. She also led on fundraising for a capital appeal during her time at Centre 404 which raised £1.2m. At Care for the Carers, Hope increased fundraising income by 82% last year and led on fundraising activity for the charity's 30th anniversary, including launching its first raffle. She has maintained her interest in volunteering, devoting time to advising for FSI and sitting on the board of Devonshire West Big Local.

Saba Shafi (33)**Managing director,
The Advocacy Academy**

Saba Shafi started professional fundraising in 2017 when she joined The Advocacy Academy (TAA). Shafi comes from a commercial background and has a knack for acquiring new business, bringing in £600,000 in commissioned sales in previous roles in management consulting. Since joining TAA, she has increased annual income five-fold from £109,000 to £540,000, including securing £1m in funding last year, which covers all of TAA's core and current programming costs for the next three years. Shafi has also successfully diversified the charity's income, growing small donors and major donor engagement, securing £120,000 of commissioning income for a new training arm, and bringing in new foundations and HNWLs. She has also secured a number of pro-bono partnerships such as a £50,000 partnership with the ad agency FCB Inferno to work on a rebrand, and was instrumental in securing a peppercorn lease on a £3m property in Brixton for TAA's Campus for Young Activists. Shafi's funding application success rate averages 65%.

Catherine Deakin (34)**Director of fundraising
and communications,
Changing Faces**

Catherine Deakin has more than a decade of experience as a fundraiser, having held leadership roles at Girlguiding, Tommy's and now Changing Faces. In those years, she has raised over £10m. At Tommy's, Deakin won a Poundland partnership worth £3m and secured partnerships with True and ING Bank worth a combined £225,000. At Girlguiding, partnerships with Tesco and Pets at Home brought in around £540,000, and she secured the first seven-figure grant bid through the HM Treasury Tampon Tax Fund. More recently, she won The Telegraph

Christmas Appeal partnership for Changing Faces, generating £142,000. In 2017, Deakin joined the IoF's Policy Advisory Board, advising on policy priorities for the Institute. This year, she launched a peer support group for fundraising and communications professionals in appearance-related charities.

Gemma Craggs (30)**Head of philanthropy,
The Prince's Trust**

Gemma Craggs has been a fundraiser at the Prince's Trust for over six years. As well as continuing to steward high-value relationships, Craggs embraced the opportunity to lead on the launch of a new giving group, Women Supporting Women. Under her leadership, the group has seen exceptional growth of more than 300% in a single year. She has worked closely with the corporate team to onboard high-profile companies, and most recently worked with he business development team and volunteer chair on International Women's Day. For this, approximately 20 companies sold goods over the weekend with a percentage of sales coming to the Trust. This alone raised more than £250,000, plus national exposure through TV appearances. Some 20 months ago this group had barely raised £200,000, but in the last financial year this had grown to more than £1m, with over 70 new supporters who are either mid – and major-level philanthropists, or companies. Craggs has worked tirelessly across all aspects to ensure the initiative's success.

Sarah Canniford (33)**Head of account
management,
Breast Cancer Now**

Sarah Canniford has worked in the charity sector for 12 years, working across challenge events, mass participation, volunteering and corporate partnerships for such charities as Macmillan Cancer Support, WaterAid and Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity (GOSH). At GOSH, she delivered the charity's most successful partnership to date, raising £1.8m in two years with Morgan Stanley. She also led on GOSH's 24/7 Challenge for MS Graduates and developed a bespoke 24-hour London-to-Paris bike ride. At Macmillan, she was a key player in stewarding the partnership with Boots, which has raised £16.6m to date. At Breast Cancer Now, Canniford leads on the delivery and ongoing development of the partnership with Ann Summers around sex and intimacy and breast cancer. It has raised £75,000 in five months against a target of £100,000 a year. She has led her team through 18 months of huge change, including a charity merger, a staff restructure, introduction of a new brand, successfully launching new partnerships and campaigns, and now the coronavirus challenge.

Jemma Gurr (29)**Head of regular giving,
University of Manchester**

Having started her fundraising career while at university, Jemma Gurr landed her first professional fundraising job at the Theatre

Royal Wakefield. But before long she was back at the University of Sheffield – first as regular giving officer and then as regular giving manager. In this role, Gurr focused on professionalising and modernising the way the campaigns operated, using data to inform decision-making and increasing income by more than 30% to around £850,000 per annum in two years. She also introduced and managed a new direct mail programme, generating more than £150,000 in year two against a spend of £50,000. At Sheffield Hospitals Charity, Gurr developed and implemented the charity's first individual giving strategy, and launched a flagship £200,000 appeal. Since joining the University of Manchester, she has project-managed and delivered its first digital appeal, generating more than £1m to support students affected by Covid-19. ■

