



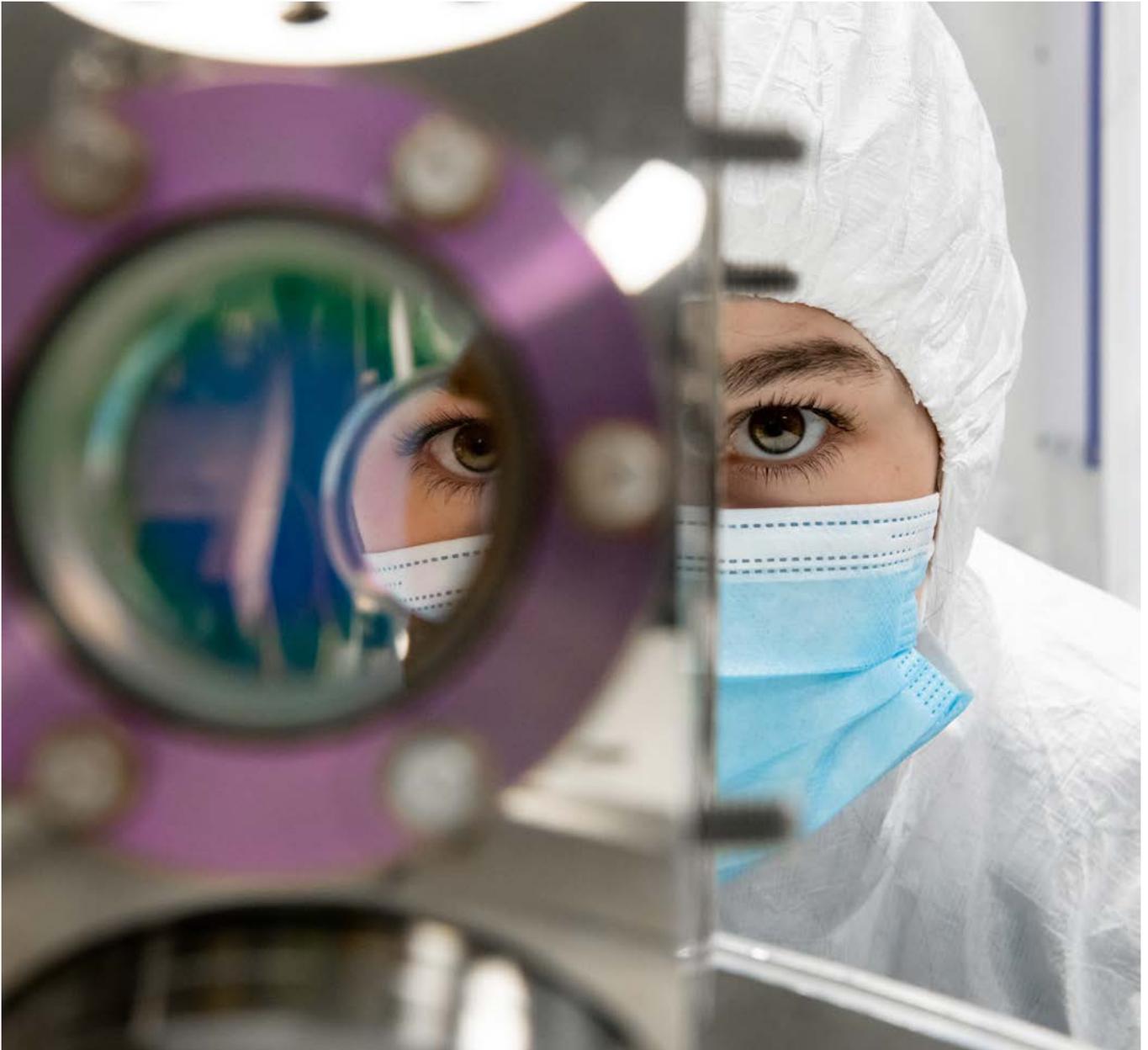
University of Sussex

Harry Lownds Memorial Scholarship

US

UNIVERSITY
OF SUSSEX

2025



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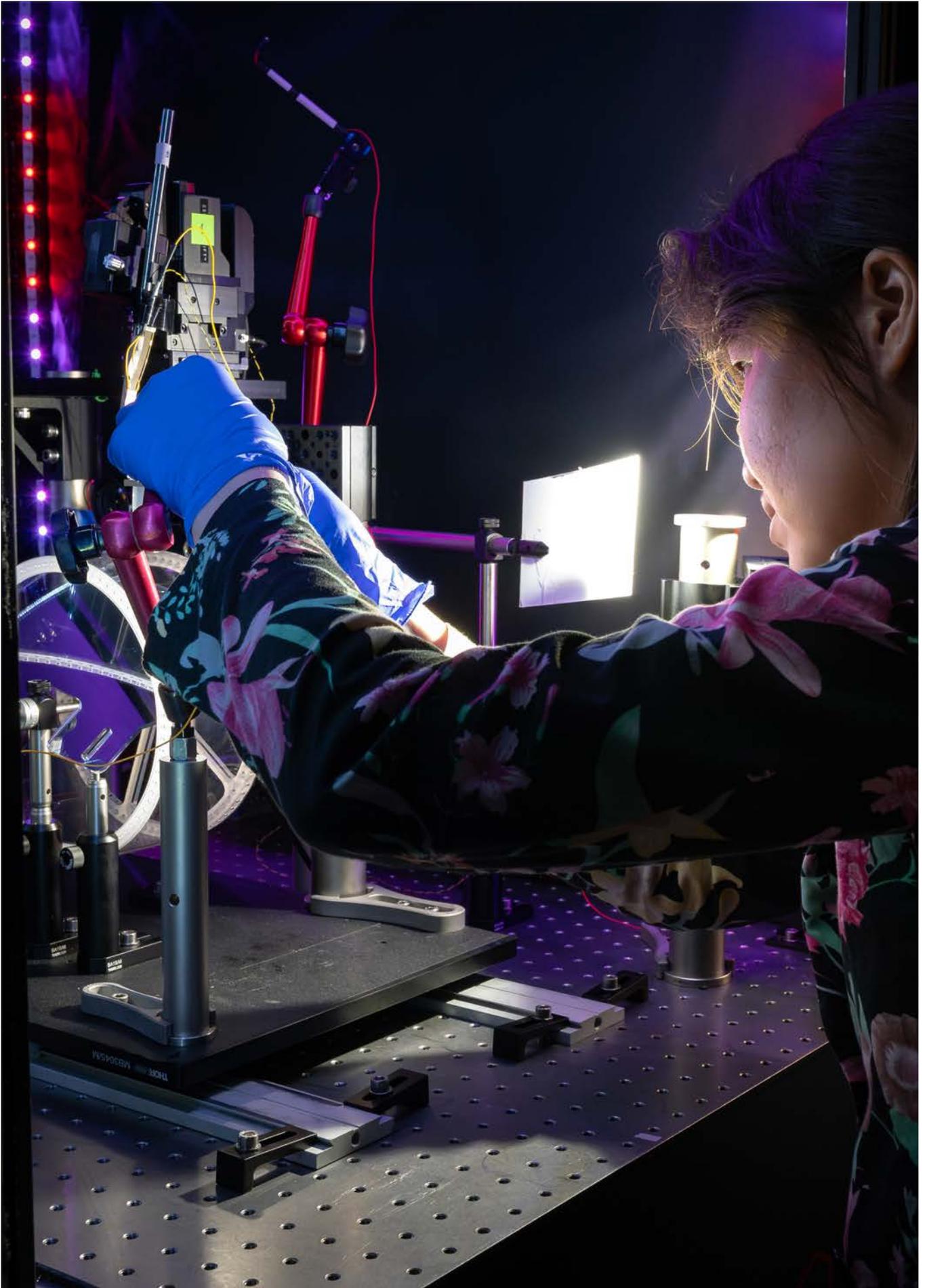
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THANK YOU

Following the close of another successful year, the University of Sussex would like to thank you for your generous support over 2024/25. The Harry Lownds Memorial Scholarship recipient, Furkan Unlukaplan, has now successfully completed his studies and will be awarded his Masters degree in January. The enclosed letter offers some insight into his very important time at Sussex.

None of this would be possible without your ongoing generosity and commitment. Thank you for your support.





A message from Professor Zahid Pranjol

Associate Dean (Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine)

Dear Matthew and family,

I hope this message finds you well. On behalf of the School of Life Sciences, I want to express our gratitude for your generosity and commitment to the Harry Lownds Memorial Scholarship. Your support has had an extraordinary impact on the students who receive these awards as evidenced by this report.

Your scholarship not only provides financial support but also inspires hope and ambition in the recipients. Students often say that being awarded a scholarship provides a great boost to their confidence and a sense of inner belief in their studies and career choices. I know that you established the scholarship in memory of your son, Harry, and I hope when you reflect on the impact of the scholarship and how it has enabled so many students to pursue their dreams and embark on a career in the sciences, that you feel some comfort.

The School of Life Sciences continues to thrive, and I am particularly proud that we have a number of initiatives to support our students, from mentoring schemes with industry partners, to employability programmes that enable students to develop their workplace skills and think about their first career steps.



As always at Sussex we continue to work in an interdisciplinary way and put students at the heart of our learning and research. Your scholarship also contributes to us being able to provide students with a Sussex experience that we hope will stay with them throughout their lives and career.

Again, thank you so much for your very generous and unwavering commitment to supporting students at Sussex.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zahid Pranjol'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Prof Zahid Pranjol
Associate Dean (Education and Students)
Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine

Letter from Furkan Unlukaplan

Genetic Manipulation and Molecular Cell Biology MSc

It's been quite a year! It's finally come to an end and I'd like to say thank you. As I officially close the chapter on my time at the University of Sussex and reflect on my journey, my thoughts continually return to the immense support I received through the Harry Lownds Memorial Scholarship. Knowing that I had your support allowed me to truly dedicate and immerse myself in my studies and the wider university experience without the constant worry of financial constraints.

Overall, my time at Sussex was magnificent. It was challenging, as life always is, but I bid farewell with good memories that I can one day tell my kids. The academic highlight for me was undoubtedly working on my Masters project titled *Convergent Evolution of Centromere targeting in ATHILA Retrotransposons*. This project allowed me to dive deep into evolution at the molecular level and phylogenies of different superfamilies within the landscape of long terminal repeat retrotransposons. Although the research felt stalled and daunting at times, the support from my supervisor, Alex Bousios, made it an invaluable lesson in independent work and critical thinking.

Most importantly, I had time for myself. I had been battling as much as my mum who had been diagnosed with and getting treatment for breast cancer for the past 2 years, so I had a few things to do. I finally had the time to focus on my theory and practical exams for a driver's licence and managed to get it within few months. I was able to travel to a few countries in Europe with my friends.

As for what comes next, I want to focus on launching a career in academic research. I have already begun applying for PhD programmes and several research assistant projects across the country, as this is the field where I know I can make the most meaningful impact. I've been fortunate to secure several meetings in the coming days to discuss a few research plans and potential roles.



Specifically, my immediate goal is to secure a role where I can focus on transposable elements and on evolution at the molecular level. The research skills and theoretical foundation that I gained at Sussex are directly applicable to these positions and I am incredibly excited about the potential to move forward. I hope to be able to share positive news about securing a PhD placement very soon!

Thank you again for your support. I hope this update brings you some insight into the impact that your generosity has had on my life and career trajectory. As I promised, I will be coming to Graduation in January and hope to see you there!

With my warmest thanks and best wishes,

Furkan Unlukaplan



Highlights

Academic
year
2024-25

THIS YEAR...

Happiest university

Sussex was ranked the happiest university in the UK in the Unifresher Happiest Universities 2026 Guide. The award recognised student satisfaction, looking at what makes students feel happy, heard and at home, bringing together nationwide survey data, student feedback and factors such as workload balance, staff support, green spaces, culture and local life. Sussex was also rated highest in the UK for student satisfaction and support, with the University's welcoming campus community and the dedication of staff to student wellbeing receiving praise.

Number one

Sussex was named number one in the world for Development Studies in the (QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025) for an incredible ninth year in a row. This has been achieved through the work of IDS and our Schools of Global Studies, Education and Social Work, Media, Arts and Humanities and the University of Sussex Business School. Only 24 universities in the world hold a QS number one Subject Ranking.

40th anniversary

We marked the 40th anniversary of Sir Harry Kroto's discovery of C60 – Buckminsterfullerene, which was to revolutionise chemistry and materials science, and ultimately led to Sir Harry winning the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1996. Sussex has, in fact, been home to no less than six Nobel Prize winners! To celebrate the anniversary of Sir Harry's pioneering discovery, we've put together a short film that you can watch [here](#).

Quantum world record

The Sussex Centre for Quantum Technologies (SCQT), headed up by Professor Winfried Hensinger, announced a world-record discovery in quantum sensing. The Centre plans to construct the world's most powerful computer, capable of solving some of the world's most pressing challenges - work which has attracted considerable external attention, even prompting a visit from Peter Kyle when he was Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).

Sustainability

We were ranked in the top 5% globally, and in the top 20 UK institutions for sustainability in the QS World University Rankings 2026. The University was recognised for its commitment to a more sustainable existence and the social and environmental impact of education and research.

Reflecting Sussex's longstanding commitment to sustainability and to educating students who can go out into the world and drive positive global change, this year we launched a Climate Justice, Sustainability and Development BA, the UK's first undergraduate level climate justice degree in the social sciences.

Robert Yates
Head of Development
Office for Advancement
University of Sussex
+44 (0)1273-872-657



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