

Where Your Legacy Thrives



“Girton College is characterised by its pioneering spirit, academic excellence, and inclusive community. We could not continue along our ground-breaking path without the generosity and vision of those who give to Girton in their Wills.”

Dr Elisabeth Kendall, Mistress

Over 150 years ago, the founders of Girton had a vision of an educational institution that would offer a first-rate university experience to talented women who were excluded from all other universities in the UK. The founders and their successors faced many challenges but the tide had turned and Girton was well on its way to transforming the global higher educational landscape.

Past: In 1869 ‘the College for Women’ opened its doors to its first five students. These early students were not allowed to attend lectures or officially to sit the tripos examinations, and were limited to studying only a few subjects. Emily Davies and her Girton co-founders fought through these obstacles and in a short space of time a sparse patch of land along the Huntingdon Road in Cambridge was transformed into a lively community of scholars and teachers.

Today: In October 2022 Girton opened its doors to 361 new students bringing the total student body to over 850. These talented scholars come from around the globe and represent nearly every subject, faculty and department of the University. They have secured their place at Girton entirely on the basis of merit, irrespective of family background, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or disability. Alongside this gifted group are over 80 research-active Fellows and Teaching Officers whose care and dedication inspires, supports and nurtures our scholars.

Future: Girton has exciting plans. As the University moves towards us we are in a prime position to be the College of North West Cambridge. We want to enhance the student experience, both for undergraduates and postgraduates, to ensure the best and the brightest can take up their places regardless of financial background; support our world-class Fellows; maintain our historic buildings; sustainably develop our estate; and carefully steward our collections.

How can our alumni and supporters make a difference?

Please consider joining the growing number of those who are remembering Girton College in their Will. The College’s future depends every bit as much as its past on the generosity and forethought that drives this style of giving. No bequest is too small to make a difference and all bequests are gratefully received and will be acknowledged.

From the College’s earliest days gifts in Wills have made a real impact. Fewer than 20 years after its foundation a bequest enabled the College to build the iconic Tower Wing, setting Girton on a pathway to permanence. Since that time bequests have allowed the College to establish a range of bursaries, scholarships and hardship grants, fund fellowships, and enrich the student experience by supporting societies, sport, music and a host of other extracurricular activities. More recent bequests have been invaluable in helping the Library and Archive to catalogue and conserve its collections, and to grow our endowment.

Girton is very grateful to the many supporters who have chosen to make an unrestricted bequest to the College. Such gifts underpin every activity in Girton and help bridge the gap between our educational costs and income from fees and charges, and are vital to Girton as it moves forward into the next 150 years and beyond.

“I am very glad you like the idea of the College—people take to it so kindly that I have great hopes of seeing it done some day...with gardens and grounds and everything that is good for the body, soul, and spirit.”

Emily Davies, writing to Miss Anna Richardson,
25 October 1866.

“Receiving a bursary was such a relief to me... Having support like this took an enormous amount of the financial pressure off and meant I could focus on my studies. Thank you so much to all who have made this possible for me and for so many other students, it makes such a difference...”

Bursary recipient, 2018

Recognising your Generosity

The College is grateful to all those who remember Girton in their Will, and recognises that it can be a very personal matter. Should you wish to notify the College of your intention, however, we would greatly appreciate it, not least so that we can fully understand your wishes and express our thanks for your generosity.

All those who do advise us of a gift to Girton in their Wills are eligible to join the 1869 Society; members will receive a purple lapel pin and will be invited from time to time to events hosted by the Mistress. In remembering Girton in your Will you are supporting a unique institution which is transforming lives —thank you.

Making a Gift in your Will

Including a gift in your Will to Girton can be the easiest and most affordable way of supporting the College. You can choose to make a cash gift or donate a proportion of your estate (even 1% can make all the difference), but either way please know that you will be helping the College reach its aims of providing financial support to any student in need, underpinning Fellowship posts that attract great minds to teach, nurture and discover, and maintaining and expanding our facilities to provide the all-round living and learning experience that is the hallmark of a Girton education. Your gifts will also help us to withstand times of financial uncertainty and make the best use of future opportunities.

Girton College is a registered charity (Registered Charity Number 1137541) so including the College in your Will may reduce your estate's Inheritance Tax liability. Since April 2012 those leaving at least 10% of their taxable estate to charity will have the tax charged on the remainder of their estate reduced from 40% to 36%. Potential legacy donors who are already considering leaving a gift in their Will may find under this relief that they can leave more to charity with little impact on the amount left to their non-charitable beneficiaries.

We recommend that you seek professional advice when making or amending a Will.

Should you choose to make a gift to Girton in your Will we suggest the following wording:

'I give to the Mistress, Fellows and Scholars of Girton College, Cambridge (Registered Charity Number 1137541) [the residue of my estate] [_____ % of the residue of my estate] [the sum of _____] free of tax for the general purposes of the College and I declare that the receipt by the Bursar or other authorised Officer of the College shall be good and sufficient discharge to my Executors.'

Further information regarding gifts in Wills, including information on planned giving for our US-based alumni and supporters, is available on our website: www.girton.cam.ac.uk/legacy.

For a conversation in complete confidence, please contact the Legacy Officer on:
+44 (0) 1223 338901 or e.cornwall@girton.cam.ac.uk.

Types of Legacy Gifts

- A residuary legacy is a gift of all, or a percentage of, your estate after other bequests, taxes and charges have been met. We ask you to please consider the merits of leaving a residuary legacy; it protects your gift to Girton against inflation, while insulating your other beneficiaries from the effects of deflation, as well as from any decision you may make to reduce the size of your estate for your own needs in older age. So this can be a win-win arrangement.
- A pecuniary legacy is a monetary gift of a specific sum; to safeguard its future value it can be index linked.
- A specific or non-monetary legacy allows you to leave items to the College: for example, stocks and shares, property, furniture, paintings or other fixed assets, either to be used, or to be sold to generate funds.
- A reversionary legacy or life interest trust leaves your assets to named beneficiaries to enjoy in their lifetime. Upon their death the whole, or a proportion of what remains, could pass to the College.
- If you are a beneficiary under a Will, you can transfer all or part of your inheritance to the College under a Deed of Variation. Gifts transferred in this way may reduce the Inheritance Tax Liability of the estate.