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**Press Release**

20 September 2022

**The Oxford Farming Conference extends bursary and scholarship programme for 2023 event.**

The 2023 Oxford Farming Conference (OFC) will support more than 40 individuals through bursaries and scholarships offering fully funded tickets, mentoring, and contributions to travel and accommodation.

With a strong focus on networking and social activities, ensuring the event is as inclusive and accessible as possible, these scholarships and bursaries will align with OFC’s charitable objectives. As part of a commitment to inform, challenge and inspire, the opportunities will enable those who may otherwise face social or economic barriers, the ability to experience one of the UK’s leading agricultural events.

Taking place from the 4 to 6 January 2023, the event will focus on “Farming a New Future”, exploring systemic solutions to the cumulative biodiversity, climate, food and energy crises, with optimism and determination not to repeat the mistakes of the past.

Commenting on the scholarships and bursaries, OFC 2023 Chair, Emily Norton said,

*“The ongoing successes of the alumni from the Scholars, Emerging Leaders and now Inspire bursary programmes is a testament to the importance of giving the next generation confidence to belong in an environment that can seem remote and intimidating.*

*“Bursaries widen the pool of talent we can bring into the conversation at Oxford, and give those individuals a chance to inspire us and learn from each other at the conference. After all, the world is run by the people who show up – if these bursaries enable even a handful of curious, innovative and alternative thinkers to have the confidence to contribute even a little bit more, then we stand a chance of creating the future we want.”*

**OFC Bursary**

New this year, the OFC bursary is awarded to individuals who are actively working in the food, farming and agricultural sector, or with an evidenced pathway to enter the industry.

Supported by NFU Mutual Charitable Trust, the Royal Agricultural Society of England, Roythornes Solicitors and Grow Up Farms, successful applicants will receive a fully funded ticket to the conference in January 2023 and can request a contribution to travel and accommodation.

OFC is encouraging applications from individuals who may have recently moved to the UK as a result of conflict overseas.

There are more than 20 bursaries available.

**OFC Inspire Programme**

The Inspire Programme enables ambitious 18 professionals from across the rural and agri-food sector to attend the OFC for the first time.

Selected on merit, they will receive a fully funded ticket to the conference in January plus accommodation and dinners, a pre-conference event in December 2022, and the opportunity to develop their network and leadership skills, with support from industry bodies and professionals, including programme sponsor [TIAH](https://tiah.org/).

Commenting on the initiative, TIAH’s Chief Executive, Janet Swadling said:

*“We’re very excited to be sponsoring the OFC Inspire programme once again. TIAH believes in collaboration and networking, opening doors and supporting the next generation to reach their full potential.*

*“The Inspire programme brings all of these elements together. Last year’s Inspire delegates have been fantastic – throughout this year, we have supported them in a variety of development activities, and they have provided invaluable insight to us as we develop TIAH. We can’t wait to meet the new delegates!”*

**OFC Scholars**

The OFC Scholars Programme aims to give young people the opportunity of peer-to-peer networking and to share views and ideas, while gaining access to key skills development training.

Delivered in partnership with McDonalds UK and Ireland, the 2023 programme includes a 2-day in-person training forum in November 2022, a series of online bespoke webinars, exclusively available to the Scholars, a fully funded ticket to OFC 2023 in January, accommodation, and dinners.

In addition, to celebrate a ten-year partnership between McDonald’s UK and Ireland and OFC, scholars from 2022 and 2023 will be invited to a one-off celebratory event, hosted during the conference.

**OFC Breaking Barriers**

As part of OFC’s commitment to encouraging and supporting diversity and inclusion, the charity launched the landmark Breaking Barriers Scholarship three years ago.

For 2023, five individuals aged under 30 years old, who identify as Black or Person of Colour (BPOC), and have an interest in the food, farming, and agricultural sector will receive a fully funded ticket to OFC with accommodation and dinners, plus mentoring, pre-conference events and materials such as books, to support their future career journey.

Supported by McDonald's UK and Ireland, Agriculture & Sustainable, Sourcing Manager, Harriet Wilson explained why they are so passionate about working with OFC.

*“There are some big changes coming and the British farming and food industry is having to think differently about how it operates in future. Unfortunately, for many young people today, a career in farming is often misunderstood. We want to challenge those misperceptions and we are keen to help the industry to diversify its talent pool.*

*That’s why we’re proud to work with the Oxford Farming Conference to provide opportunities for young people from non-agri and diverse backgrounds to attend the 2023 Conference. We hope the Scholarship continues to inspire candidates from any background to consider a future career in the industry.”*

**How to apply for OFC bursaries and scholarships**

To apply for a bursary or scholarship, visit [www.ofc.org.uk](http://www.ofc.org.uk). Applications close on 30 September 2022.

The OFC Scholar programme is funded by agricultural organisations, who coordinate their own application process and nominations. To fund a scholar, please contact [secretariat@ofc.org.uk](mailto:secretariat@ofc.org.uk)

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**Issued by Jane Craigie Marketing. For further details or interviews, please contact**[**marketing@ofc.org.uk**](mailto:marketing@ofc.org.uk)**or Rebecca on 07792 467730**

**Notes to Editors:**

* For more information on the Oxford Farming Conference (OFC):

**Website:** [www.ofc.org.uk](http://www.ofc.org.uk/)

**Twitter:**[@oxfordfarming](http://www.twitter.com/oxfordfarming)

**YouTube:** [OxfordFarmingConference](https://www.youtube.com/oxfordfarmingconference" \t "_blank)

* The [Council](https://www.ofc.org.uk/council) is made up of 10 voluntary directors. The OFC 2023 Chair is Emily Norton.
* OFC is held annually in January over three days and includes a vibrant programme of speakers, panel sessions, politics sessions and easy networking.
* The 77th conference will take place from the 4 to 6 January 2023 in Oxford and online. A programme of fringes will also be available, online, in December 2022.
* OFC has established a reputation for strong debate and exceptional speakers.
* OFC is a charity that invests in the agricultural education and knowledge-sharing. It attracts over 600 delegates every year, including many people from the wider food chain, retail, NGOs, scientific organisations, media, policy-making bodies and governments from around the world.
* With HRH Princess Royal as its patron, OFC is a charity with a remit to educate and transfer knowledge in the agricultural sector. As part of its charitable undertakings, the OFC sponsors young people to attend the conference, to travel overseas and it seeks to develop emerging leaders.