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bp

SOCIAL MOBILITY  
BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

2020 IMPACT REPORT



## An Introduction from our Board of Trustees

SMBP works with students from low income backgrounds from across the UK, in Year 12 in England and Wales, Year 13 in Northern Ireland and S6 in Scotland, enabling access to work insight with multiple employers, resilience training and lifetime career mentoring.

Students attend a Work Insight and Skills week as part of a SMBP facilitated cluster, spending a day at four different businesses and a fifth day at a professional sports club where students learn about the psychology of resilience and goal achievement models, supported by our resilience partner Cleartrack Performance.

We pride ourselves on our lean approach to delivery; SMBP employs two full time members and one part time member of staff who in turn coordinate 700 plus volunteers within the participating businesses who deliver content on SMBP days or take responsibility for central functions under the direction of the SMBP team.

A huge thank you to our funders and volunteers without whom SMBP would not be possible. Whilst 2020 has been a challenging year, the SMBP students kept calm and carried on, enabling our most successful year to date.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees,  
Andrew Garard, Chair



# A Message from the Team



Despite the added challenges Covid-19 brought with many SMBP volunteers being furloughed and some existing partners unable to support, SMBP increased its geographical reach in 2020 with the addition of the South Yorkshire Cluster, increased the number of corporate partners by 8% and maintained student attendance at 450.

In 2021, in line with an ongoing commitment to UK wide growth, SMBP will extend its reach by introducing Clusters in Cardiff, South Cambridgeshire, Rugby and the North East, as well as increasing student places in Belfast and London. Following the success of this years' virtual delivery model, SMBP will also introduce a virtual national week, accessible to students living in more rural areas of the UK and outside of our existing cluster regions.

The growth of SMBP to date is a result of collaboration. We work alongside businesses, sports clubs, charities and local councils, enabling each to play their part in the delivery of an SMBP Cluster. This report reflects on our collaborations in 2020 and features feedback from students and partners involved in 2020, a review of our programme delivery model and details of our End Digital Poverty Pilot which we hope to expand in 2021. Enjoy!

Barry Matthews  
Founder

Jessica Organ  
Programme Director

Rose Firth  
Head of Operations

Jade Emmett  
Senior Operations Executive

With special thanks to our funding partners...



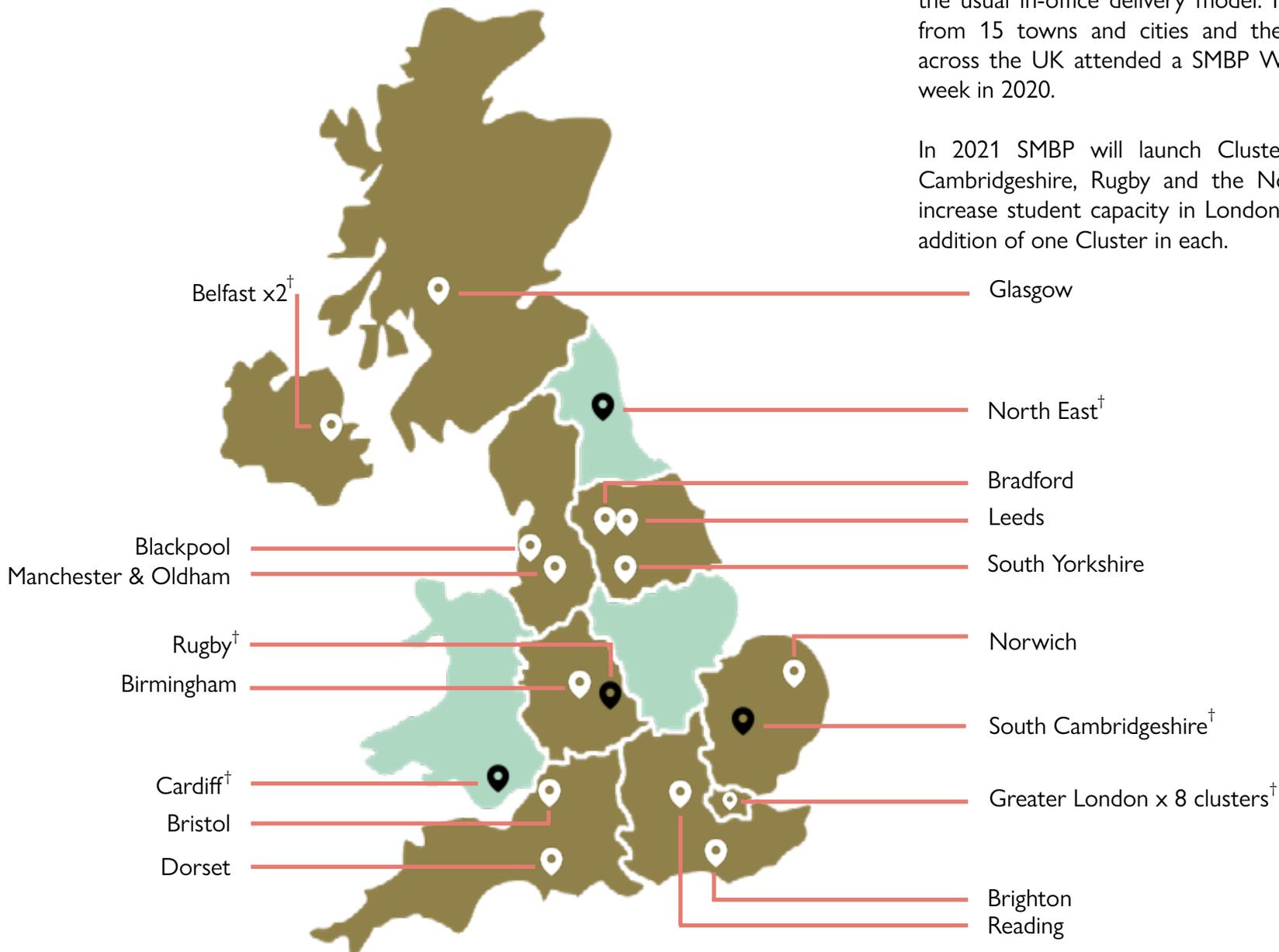
Thank you to our participating and student sourcing partners for their ongoing support



# 2020 Clusters and Beyond

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the SMBP team rapidly pivoted and worked with its partners to ensure an online programme was available to students as an alternative to the usual in-office delivery model. In total, 450 students from 15 towns and cities and their surrounding areas across the UK attended a SMBP Work Insight and Skills week in 2020.

In 2021 SMBP will launch Clusters in Cardiff, South Cambridgeshire, Rugby and the North East as well as increase student capacity in London and Belfast with the addition of one Cluster in each.



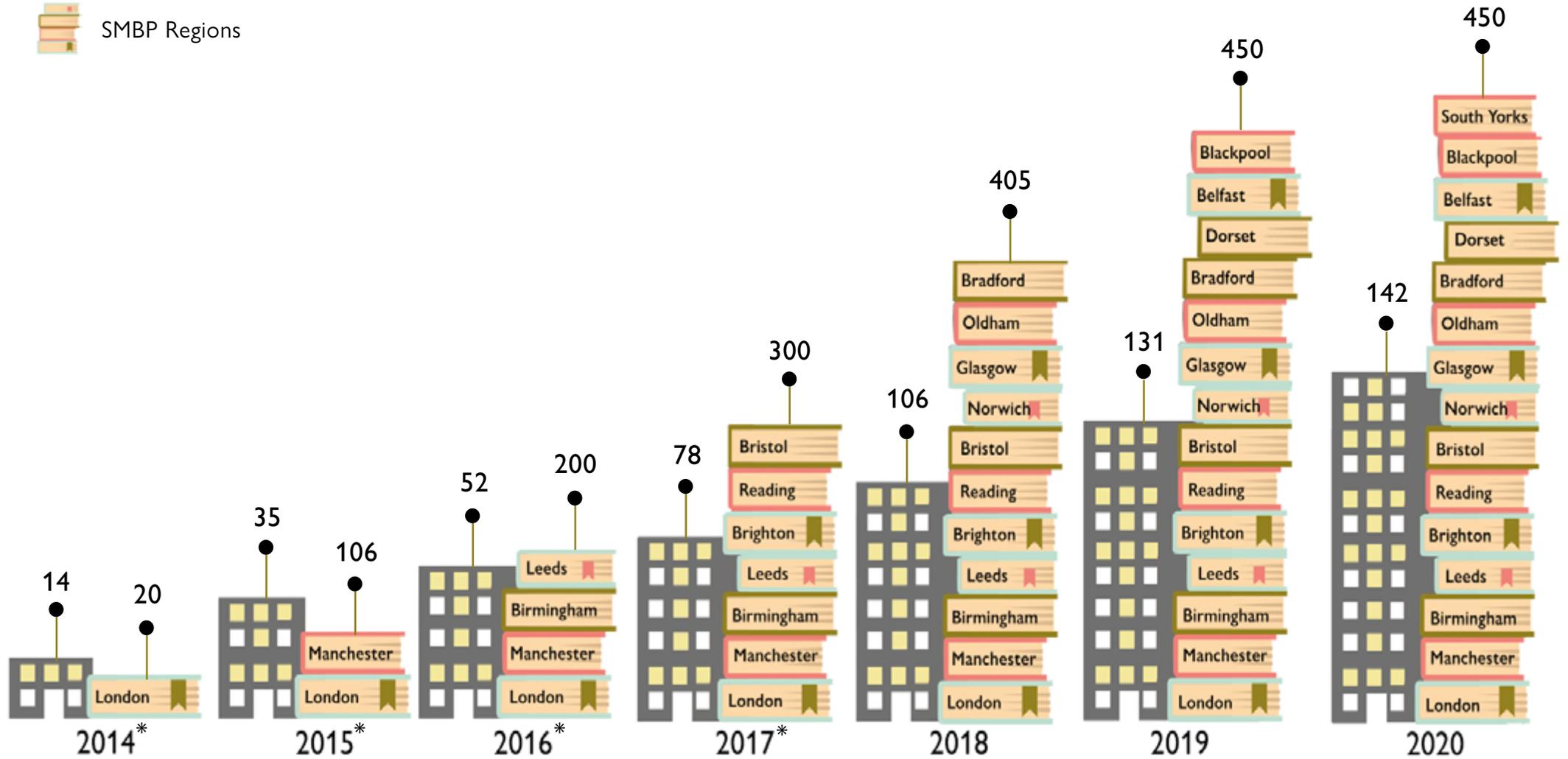
<sup>†</sup> New cluster for 2021

# Our Growth History

## Key

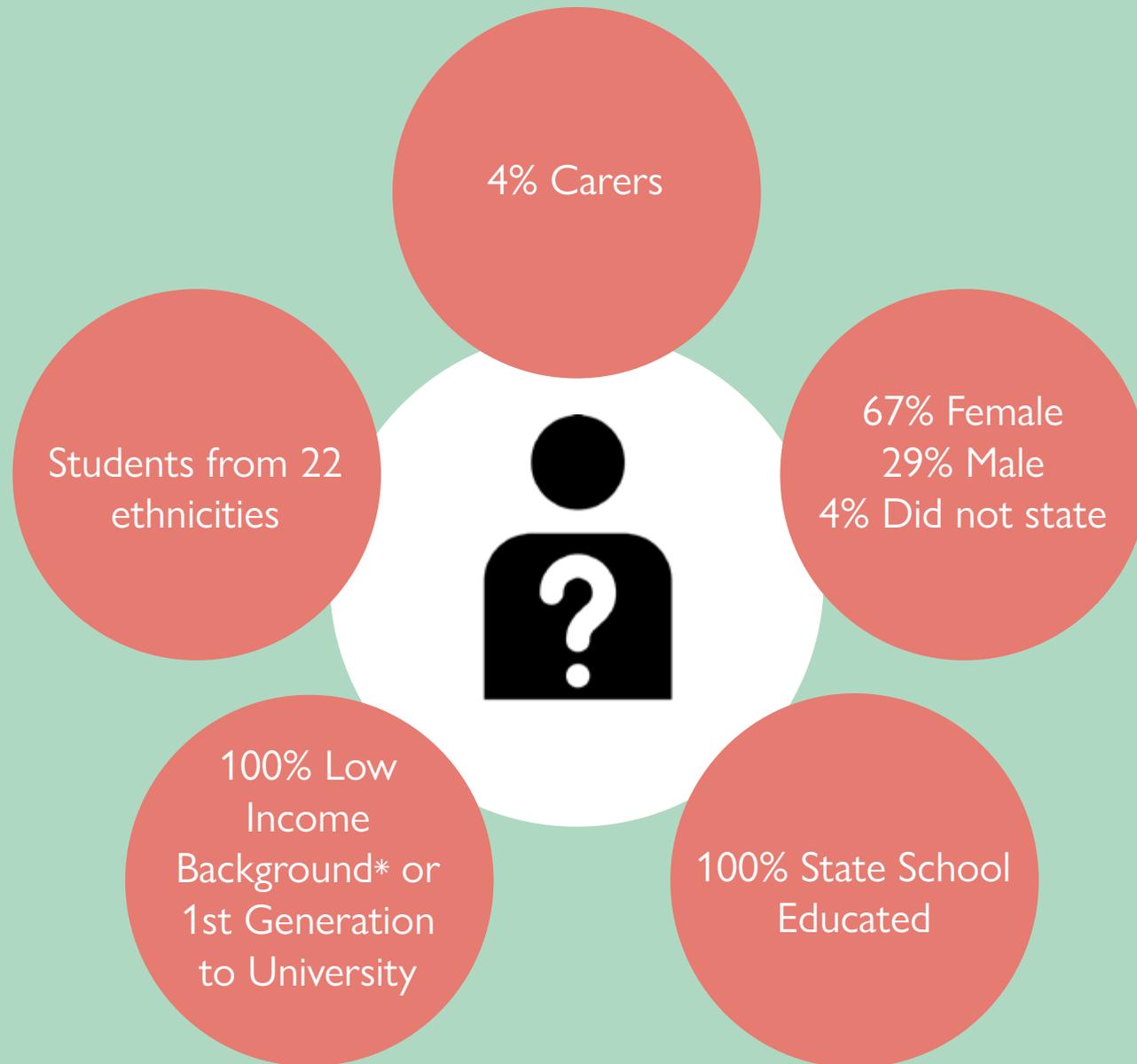
 Participating organisations

 SMBP Regions



\* Operating as the Legal Social Mobility Partnership

# 2020 Student Participant Breakdown



\* Have been eligible for free school meals, or live in a postcode with a Quintile 1 POLAR rating, or live in a postcode which has a Cat. 4 or 5 ACORN rating, or gross household income is equal to or less than the average household expenditure for that area.

# Programme Delivery

## Student Feedback

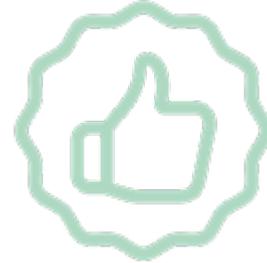
Students were invited to provide feedback following each live webinar and complete a post programme survey; the latter measuring the impact the week had on their key competencies as well as their overall experience. They confirmed the following:

97%



of students rated their SMBP week good or very good

99%



of students said they would recommend the SMBP Programme to other students

99%



of students said they have a better or firm idea what they would like to do for a job/career in the future

### Survey Question

Please rate yourself against the following skills, thinking about the impact the SMBP week has had on each:

#### Teamwork & Leadership



92%

rated their understanding good or very good

#### Communication



88%

rated their understanding good or very good

#### Resilience & Goal Planning



92%

rated their understanding good or very good

#### Creativity & Problem Solving



87%

rated their understanding good or very good

# Programme Delivery

## Student Feedback

### Survey Question

When thinking about what you have gained as a result of the SMBP week please rate the following statements:

**I am aware of how a business operates & what they are looking for in employees**



**91%**

of students agree

**I have come away with relevant experience that I can include in my CV and talk about in interviews**



**91%**

of students agree

**I have learnt about practical things I can do to help me reach my career goals**



**91%**

of students agree

**The experience will strengthen my personal statement for applications, e.g. to University**



**91%**

of students agree

### Survey Question

When thinking about what you have gained as a result of SMBP, how do you now rate yourself against the following:

**Your understanding of the different career opportunities available to you within the organisations which hosted sessions**



**91%**

rated their understanding good or very good

**Your understanding of the qualifications and skills needed to get a career in Law**



**89%**

rated their understanding good or very good

**Your understanding of the qualifications and skills needed to get a career in Finance**



**61%**

rated their understanding good or very good

**Your motivation to achieve your career goals**



**85%**

rated their improvement good or very good

# Student Testimonials

This year, we asked students to record and upload a video blog of their SMBP experience; what they had enjoyed the most, what they had learned, and whether they would recommend the scheme to others. We were blown away by the responses from the students. These were then condensed down into a 3 minute video, which you can watch by [following this link](#).



*"I took part in various tasks and activities throughout the week working with companies such as BNY Mellon, Simply Business and Dow Jones. I learnt about capital markets, the people that are involved in businesses and how they run, how to gain commercial awareness and what competencies I can improve on before applying for jobs...some of these competencies included teamwork & leadership and communication, both of which I feel I have really improved on during the week."*

**Bailey Coates**

*"Every day was amazing, I enjoyed the insight I discovered from different businesses that held the 5 sessions. I loved meeting new people on the course and employees at the companies...I don't think anything could have been improved, regardless of it being run on Zoom...I recommend this to every student that wants to gather business insight or just wants to expand their knowledge."*



**Millie Smith**



*"I've learnt about different job roles and also about resilience, coping under pressure, breathing and the fight or flight response. I also learnt about methods to use when applying for a job such as the STAR framework. I would recommend this experience to a friend as it was helpful and it gave me skills I could use in the future."*

**Saida Poci**

# Student Testimonials

*"I did sessions with Collins Aerospace, Mishcon de Reya, Flex, PwC and Cleartrack Performance. Obviously with Coronavirus, I don't think anyone expected the programme to go ahead and to be able to take part from home. I still took loads from the experience and I feel like it was incredibly valuable, I'm thankful to everyone who was involved."*

**Beth Macaulay**

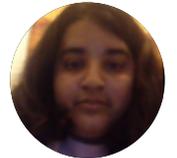


*"Through connecting with all of the partners I've learnt so much more about different pathways into careers and I'm even more excited and motivated to begin mine. I've developed my commercial awareness and some key transferable skills for my future so thank you!"*

**Molly Hoy**

*"SMBP's work experience week has just been fantastic through and through. They dealt amazingly with all kinds of changes and the virtual week was fun and insightful as though I was physically there. There were a range of companies that we as students got to interact with, whether from the dairy industry or media. I learnt so much about so many different types of work."*

**Zainab Malik**



*"Taking part in SMBP was an exceptionally valuable experience and we received some brilliant insight into the corporate world. I'm confident that throughout my career and many other aspects of my life I will look back on this placement as a resource which contributed significantly to my professional awareness."*

**Joseph McDonnell**

*"My favourite part of the week was being able to talk to successful people who share the same passions that I do. It made me so excited for University and my future career. I received really valuable advice and it was very inspiring. I loved the week and I can't thank you all enough."*

**Courtney David**



# Student Sourcing Partner Testimonials

Rather than reinventing the wheel each time we open a cluster in a new region, we partner with local social enterprises, charities, businesses and councils who have pre-existing relationships with students from low income backgrounds in their area. We also work with larger organisations with multiple local hubs such as the Sutton Trust, IntoUniversity and Elephant Group.

“The team at SMBP are fantastic to work with! They invest in building strong relationships with their partner organisations and the team are always on hand to support. We were very impressed by their responsiveness during the national lockdown period and this years’ virtual programme has been a great success. All adaptations and expectations were communicated clearly throughout and we were delighted by the opportunity to invite even more students across our network to take part.

Student feedback demonstrates how valuable they found the opportunity to learn about a wide range of sectors and gain an insight into the working world.

The SMBP team are consistently focused on measurement and impact and we greatly value the personalised report we receive about our students’ engagement in the programmes. They are always open to feedback from both organisations and students and it is clear how this is used to improve their programmes each year.

We look forward to continuing to grow our partnership with SMBP in the future as we expand into even more cities throughout the UK.”

**Emma Czestochowski, IntoUniversity**



“A massive thank you to the SMBP team for providing our students with a valuable, insightful and informative experience! Despite the change in format this year and quick pivot to an online programme, our feedback from students has been as positive as ever and we are all grateful that they did not miss out on such a beneficial opportunity. For us at The Sutton Trust, great industry insight opportunities should increase student confidence, build new skills and support students with making informed choices about their future and the fantastic SMBP weeks helped our students develop in all of these areas. Thank you to SMBP and their delivery organisations for supporting our students, especially in these unprecedented times!”

**Gemma Collins, The Sutton Trust**

# Student Sourcing Partner Testimonials

“The students that took part in the 2020 programme found themselves participating in a manner that was not what was originally expected. The effort and commitment from Rose and SMBP team and businesses involved showed a commitment to providing opportunities to students at a time when they really needed it. The online work and collaboration genuinely helped our New College Bradford students develop their communication and listening skills and provided them with an opportunity to discuss the pathways and routes to employability and future success. I know the students who were involved have a experience that they can draw upon and share with future employers and have a network of businesses and individuals that they can utilise as the next stage in the journey approaches.

I am grateful for all the hard work and effort that went into this programme and the support the has been offered and is continuing to be offered by the SMBP team and in particularly Rose Firth. The recruitment drive for next year has already begun!”

**Paul Hunt, Business Teacher, New College Bradford**



“As Bristol Cluster Lead, Burges Salmon were delighted with the positive levels of student interest to join the SMBP programme. As a firm, Burges Salmon has a strong focus on social mobility. Through our community links we were able to reach out to various stakeholders to widen the opportunity to year 12 students for the Bristol cluster programme and received record levels of interest.

The SMBP programme is a fantastic opportunity for students to learn more about business and professional services careers. It was encouraging to read the students’ feedback and how much they appreciated participating in the week. The students commented that the week helped them to practice their presentation skills and provided opportunity to network with other students. Thank you to the SMBP team and partners who joined Burges Salmon on the journey to deliver, for the first time, in a virtual setting”

**Sarah Hamnett, CR Advisor, Burges Salmon LLP**

“Despite the challenges that have been posed by the current pandemic, the team behind the SMBP week put together an excellent programme which gave students a high-quality experience despite the restrictions in place. It is excellent for students to have had this experience at a time when opportunities are restricted. Students consistently return with a new level of confidence, aspiration and focus, which perfectly coincides with starting their final year of study with us. We see this evidenced in higher quality personal statements, or a more focussed approach to seeking apprenticeships or employment. We look forward to continuing this partnership as it is of such immense benefit to students”

**Heather Ward, Achievement Tutor, Notre Dame College, Leeds**



# Participating Business Partner Testimonials



WillisTowersWatson 

“It was our pleasure to host SMBP’s first virtual induction session for the Norwich cluster. In a very difficult year of COVID-19, SMBP were very supportive in helping us host this virtual event and encouraging students to attend. We were delighted to show students the diverse work opportunities available outside of London as well as helping them build key competency skills required in the workplace, such as communication and teamwork. It was also a great opportunity for WTW colleagues to have a positive impact on these students, and we look forward to partnering with SMBP again on future events”

**Niamh Grogan, Global Chief Compliance Officer, Willis Towers Watson**

“BT has been working with SMBP for a number of years. The work SBMP does to reach out to young people from diverse backgrounds has never been more relevant, especially with the challenges they face with Covid and lockdown. A number of colleagues ran virtual experience sessions for students based in Sheffield, London and Bristol. We’ve been inspired by their resilience and enthusiasm for learning. We’ve welcomed the opportunity to support young people in building skills that are more important than ever before for achieving their full potential. We look forward to continuing to work with SMBP and other businesses to push forward social mobility in the UK.”

**Angela Thomas, Principal Lawyer, BT**



“Beginning our journey in support of SMBP and their mission has been an uplifting experience for the members of our company who have been involved, and I have high hopes for its expansion across our businesses in the UK. The SMBP team made so much of what would otherwise be quite a challenge easy to do as they have seen it all before. The SMBP team quickly resolved the many potential obstacles and assisted with ideas for things to do that would be interesting for the teenagers we would be working with. This was a great opportunity to involve different people on our own teams in a project that was meaningful and important. The positive reaction we had to what we did was inspiring all round. I see great opportunities ahead in supporting SMBP and their important work, not only for what they do but also in how we think about what we do. Thank you SMBP for the privilege of being part of what you do.”

**James Hardie, Head of Marketing, Collins Aerospace**

# Participating Business Partner Testimonials



“Given the events of 2020, it’s even more important we play a part in the lives of young people and working closely with SMBP to shift entirely to a virtual programme of sessions was a great success. Myself and colleagues thoroughly enjoyed delivering our Insights day - I’m pretty sure we got as much out of it as the students!”

**Emma Forrest, Social Impact Manager, Simply Business**

“It has been our privilege to lead the Birmingham Cluster for SMBP since its inception. 2020 has been a year like no other and with immense gratitude to all of the volunteers in all of our fellow law firms and the business partners, it was uplifting to see the way everyone responded to the challenges and delivered a very different but nonetheless highly impactful programme for the students. This pandemic has the potential to have a lasting effect on the trajectories of young people and this programme was a test to their tenacity and resilience and the biggest plaudits go to them for engaging as they did and embracing everything that SMBP 2020 had to offer them.”

**Lorna Gavin, Head of Diversity, Inclusion & Corporate Responsibility, Gowling WLG**



“This year we partnered with the Social Mobility Business Partnership to run our first virtual Insight Day for students who would like to attend university and hear directly from companies about what they offer graduates. It was a pleasure to add to their knowledge and support their future career aspirations by explaining what life is like at Direct Line Group”

**James Peacock & Lesley Ferguson, Direct Line Group**

# New Cluster Case Study - South Yorkshire

## An Introduction

A huge shout out to South Yorkshire for showing true resilience in a year of adversity and going ahead with plans to launch a new Cluster!

SMBP were drawn to South Yorkshire Futures, a programme led by Sheffield Hallam University and backed by Department for Education, through a shared vision of improving social mobility in the South Yorkshire area. As part of SMBP's growth, we were looking to expand our reach across Yorkshire and following the great work SYF are doing, this collaboration seemed to be a perfect fit for SYF's 'Aspiration strand', which works to improve skills and increase employment among less advantaged young people.

Due to the pandemic, South Yorkshire was the only new Cluster to be created in 2020. It was not without facing some bumps in the road, such as onboarding new partners due to furloughed staff, but the SMBP team worked closely with the Cluster Head and Student Sourcing Lead, Liz and Bianca (South Yorkshire Futures) to ensure students were recruited and partners were equipped and supported for the week to run smoothly. Here's what they had to say about the week...

With thanks to the following organisations for their contribution throughout the week...



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions



Department  
for Education



# New Cluster Case Study - South Yorkshire

## A View From our Volunteer Cluster Head, South Yorkshire Futures

“[South Yorkshire Futures](#) – Sheffield Hallam University’s social mobility partnership – drives improvements in academic attainment and raises aspirations for young people in the region. Too often, young people’s careers are not based on what, but who they know. For students who do not have access to extensive networks, this can significantly limit their prospects, and, unfortunately, this tends to disproportionately impact young people from low income backgrounds.



South Yorkshire Futures were therefore determined to create opportunities for year 12 students across the South Yorkshire area and recruited 32 students for the Cluster.

Despite Covid-19 disrupting initial plans for the programme, the week kicked off with Bianca running the newly formed Induction Programme (created and donated to SMBP by Nicola Jones, Athena Professional) allowing students a warm welcome to the programme and helping them to develop an understanding of SMBP’s four key competencies (communication, teamwork and leadership, resilience and goal planning and creativity and problem solving) and why they matter. Following this, South Yorkshire partners delivered webinars across the week including: PlusNet, PwC, DWP and DfE and Sheffield Teaching Hospital (SYREC). This support from our employer-partners was not only a testament to the great employers in the region but an endorsement of the importance of social mobility programmes to engage and inspire the future workforce.

Although we all had to adapt to ensure the programme could be delivered virtually, we were delighted with the digital tools SMBP put in place. The Zoom platform, with options for breakout rooms and interactive polling, allowed meaningful interaction with students to take place in what could have been a very challenging environment.

Finally, the new Group Mentoring platform will be a great support to South Yorkshire students giving them access to several professionals from a wide variety of organisations. Students can log into the portal at any time and put in a request for support from a mentor volunteer to assist them with their CV, personal statement, university or apprenticeship application forms and for help and advice on interviews.

It is great to know there is real sustainability for our young people on the programme, and the option for this support to continue long into their careers should they need it.”

**Elizabeth Perry and Bianca Roberts, South Yorkshire Futures**

# New Cluster Case Study - South Yorkshire

## Participating Business Testimonials

“We have our own range of programmes and activities, but we know that there are organisations with expertise, experience and skills that are leading the way and can through collaboration reach parts of the country we cannot alone. We have partnered with the SMBP as we were confident that they not only offered a high quality programme but would also help us raise our game. This is all about the positive impact we can have on people’s lives and the continuing collaboration with the SMBP and our South Yorkshire experience has underlined the benefits of partnering”

**Andy Boucher, International Tax Partner, PwC**



“It was a delight to be a part of SMBP week and speak to students about life as a Civil Servant. We discussed the different roles available across government departments as well as the various professional bodies that exist. We made sure that the session was predominantly student-led, which gave them the opportunity to develop their self-confidence and presentation skills, as well as address any misconceptions they had about the civil service. The feedback we received from the students was really positive; the day gave us ideas on how to improve our future outreach sessions and how to collaborate effectively with other employers. We look forward to getting involved next year!”

**Suzanna Fairbairns, Apprentice & Schools Outreach Volunteer at the Department for Education**

# SMBP End Digital Poverty Collaboration Pilot

Building on SMBP's founding principle of change through collaboration, we spearheaded an innovative 'end digital poverty' pilot project in the summer of 2020. The pilot was designed to:

- complement our pivot to full online delivery in response to the pandemic in 2020; and
- stress test a collaboration model which could enable all UK businesses to contribute to the provision of devices, data and, equally importantly, technology help desk support to individuals from low income backgrounds.

## The Pilot Partners



## The Pilot Model

The model piggybacked on the existing commercial relationship between a business and their mobile network operator.

Meggitt PLC donated a proportion of their Vodafone 'device try before you buy' tech fund and a 4G SIM to SMBP students in need.

The devices and data were provided to SMBP students using the same model for new Meggitt employees hence not triggering the need to identify a standalone budget or create new process.

The devices were then set up with the SMBP App and distributed on a pro bono basis by Vodafone to the SMBP students. The devices were also protected, at the set up phase, by software donated by MobileIron; the software restricted access to harmful content and enabled remote lockdown and wiping of the device if stolen.

SMBP, Meggitt and Vodafone agreed a model to provide first and second line tech support to deal with any issues the students had with the hardware, software or connectivity.

PTI, together with N2S, were tasked with assessing the future scalability of the model through the utilisation of refurbished devices and the creation of a virtual helpdesk platform to enable a 'hub and spoke' collaboration between SMBP businesses. Following on from this assessment, SMBP and [Red Badger's Mission Beyond project](#) are currently in discussions with IBM to make this a reality!

# SMBP End Digital Poverty Collaboration Pilot

## What the Partners Thought

“Instead of just talking about the problem of digital poverty, in a very short space of time we have collaborated with our supplier Vodafone UK, Mobile Iron and N2S to find a solution. We are delivering not just the devices, but also the necessary mobile data, safeguarding protection and adequate help desk support to address digital poverty amongst the 2020 SMBP student cohort. This approach has an immediate impact for those who are suffering the most exclusion, made worse by Covid-19.”

**Rebecca Mayfield, Director of Ethics & Corporate Responsibility, Meggitt plc**



“We’re passionate about doing our bit to address the impact of digital poverty and have worked on many projects to this end since the Covid-19 crisis began. We’re delighted to be providing connectivity and technical support to work placement students who would otherwise miss out on such important life experiences during this most challenging of times for young people.”

**Andrew Yorston, Head of Legal, Vodafone UK**



“Digital poverty is not solved by providing an individual with a device. Without data and support it’s useless. A Ferrari is beautiful to look at but without fuel and someone to help when it goes wrong it remains something to look at. I’m proud to be supporting SMBP and excited to collaborate not compete with other corporates to level up the UK.”

**Andrew Gomarsall MBE, Former England International & Director at N2S**



“This is a great example of what the PTI network can achieve. We can act in an agile way bringing together like-minded people with gold-standard skills for the greater good of society.”

**Sir Kenneth Olisa, Lord Lieutenant of London & PTI Chairman**



# Programme Delivery Model

## Resilience & Goal Planning Review

### Muhammad Gangat, Volunteer Head of Alumni Communications



"I attended the SMBP programme in 2016, it was a priceless experience in my quest to understand the business world and how legal advisors worked within it. Since then, I have graduated from SOAS University of London with a Law degree, completed my Legal Practice Course at the University of Law and will be starting my Solicitor training contract at Hogan Lovells in 2022. Throughout my career journey the experiences through SMBP have been a point I could focus on in applications and interviews; it has underpinned the personal growth and development, the passion and awareness for commercial law that I developed.

During the SMBP Work Insight and Skills week I attended 4 business days and the London Cluster Resilience and Goal Planning day, then hosted by the Harlequins FC Foundation. Resilience has been a key part of my journey to date and something I have regularly applied when experiencing my own setbacks.

Developed by Cleartrack Performance (led by ex-professional athlete, Mark Soden) and validated by Headmaster and child psychologist Dr Trevor Richards, the resilience day is a key feature of all SMBP weeks across the UK. The Cleartrack Performance team run a Train the Trainer session in London with our delivery partners, some of the biggest names in UK sport including Manchester United, Ulster Rugby, Wasps and Southampton FC. They then support the delivery of the course on a voluntary basis across the UK to ensure consistency in each Cluster.

The course consists of 5 modules which focus on practical steps we all can take to manage & insulate ourselves from pressure and deal with setbacks. These steps have their foundation in the world of professional sport but apply equally to navigating a career journey. In 2020 the course was developed into a supported learning app including guided Cleartrack seminars featuring the likes of Martin Lewis OBE, Sir Lenny Henry and Dame Heather Rabbatts, quizzes and reflection points. The key takeouts are reiterated further by videos from professional athletes such as England rugby player Kyle Sinckler and British athlete Morgan Lake. We will return to physical delivery at our professional sport club partners next year (including, new for 2021, Arsenal FC) but the app will augment our delivery model going forward to enable continuous learning beyond the SMBP Resilience and Goal Planning day experience.

Following my resilience training with Cleartrack Performance in 2019 I am now a volunteer delivery lead for SMBP allowing me to pass on my knowledge to students. I am looking forward to delivering more resilience days in 2021 as we reintroduce our face-to-face days."

"Supporting and partnering with the SMBP over the last 7 years has simply been a joy to be part of and one hell of a journey since its beginnings in 2014. Resilience is such a foundation skill for the students that SMBP work with as they look to transition to the next stage in their career journey. We are delighted to be able to provide the support to students and the trainers who assist them across the UK. We are extremely proud to contribute to this huge social mobility movement that we could never approach alone."

**Mark Soden, Founder & Managing Director, Cleartrack Performance**



Official  
Resilience Partner



# Programme Delivery Model

## Collaboration & Operational Efficiency Review

### Shama Aktar, Volunteer Head of Student Experience



“SMBP was a fantastic opportunity that gave me a thorough insight into how the law is integrated with business. The scheme allowed me to gain and develop transferable skills that have continuously helped me stand out in my interviews, and I recently secured a training contract with Arnold & Porter. Having the opportunity to visit and network with household names such as ITV, Microsoft, Yahoo and Viacom, it pushed me out of my comfort zone and heightened my interest for a career in commercial law.

Since I attended SMBP it has gone from strength to strength, increasing geographical reach, student placements and corporate partners each year. SMBP punches above its weight by facilitating collaboration. It is not a delivery agent; rather, it provides the tools for 4 businesses and their local professional sports club to share the workload of providing work experience and access to a central mentoring platform to provide career advice aftercare for life. I am thrilled to be a mentor on the platform, helping students get one step closer to attaining the jobs they work so hard towards.

The small (2.5 FTE) but perfectly formed SMBP team broker relationships with student sourcing partners, provide all materials required for the onboarding of students, train mentors and SMBP resilience day delivery leads and organise & pay for all student travel. This enables businesses to focus on the planning of their day and limits the cost of participating to the cost of sandwiches at lunchtime! With such a small team, SMBP has always embraced operational efficiency practices usually associated with a FTSE 100; not surprising given the team are former commercial colleagues from ITV! This year was no exception:

- SMBP introduced Safelink, a secure platform for sharing sensitive documents and data. Each regional cluster of partners now has access to a data room where all the materials and templates they need are stored and any documents they need to share can be uploaded. It has vastly reduced email volume and overcame the challenge of sending multiple attachments over email with password protection. Huge thanks to Safelink for their generous donation!
- A full review of the SMBP Competency Framework was completed this year in partnership with Skills Builder ([www.skillsbuilder.org](http://www.skillsbuilder.org)). At the end of each work insight day students were prompted to log their experiences by reference to the competencies. By the end of the week each student had a range of competency based anecdotes to include in their personal statement and refer to in interviews.
- Last but not least for this year saw the launch of the SMBP Student App. The SMBP team worked with Fliplet to design and develop an app to support student registration, programme delivery and continue to support the students after the SMBP week. The app was key to this years virtual delivery providing students with access to the live webinars, pre reading and reminders a webinar was starting via push notifications. Huge thanks to Mike Gallop and the team at Fliplet for the generous donation of the software and developer time and our very own volunteer CTO, Annette Brown from Milbank LLP, for bringing the project to life!

I'm really proud to be a member of the volunteer senior leadership team at SMBP and look forward to supporting SMBP's continued growth and evolution in 2021 and beyond!"

“It has been a great journey, not only for the students but also the SMBP Team as it has faced some of its toughest challenges during the recent global pandemic. The SMBP team worked closely with our amazing partners to deliver a digital Skills Week made possible by the generous donations of products, services and support from everyone involved.”

**Annette Brown, IT Manager, Milbank LLP & Volunteer Chief Technology Officer, SMBP**



# Programme Delivery Model

## Group Mentoring Platform Review

### Symrun Gakhal, Volunteer Head of Impact



“SMBP was an invaluable experience in my journey to securing a training contract with Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer in 2018. As well as having fantastic names such as ITV and Aston Martin on my CV, the skills and support gained along the way prepared me for assessment centres and beyond!

I now volunteer for SMBP overseeing our student sourcing arrangements to enable more students like me to experience an SMBP Work Insight and Skills Week and receive lifelong career coaching through our Group Mentoring offer.

In 2020, SMBP launched a new Group Mentoring platform powered by MentorXchange to support the ever-growing user base of SMBP alumni students. The platform, backed by developers H Farm, has streamlined the onboarding process of both students and mentors whilst strengthening the already high level of safeguarding SMBP delivers.

2020 has also witnessed a bolstering of our support to mentors through the provision of virtual training to compliment the SMBP Group Mentoring Guide, designed by Silverloop; a document created by HR teams from our partners working in collaboration to produce a bible of what good looks like in terms of CVs, Personal Statements, answers to competency questions regularly asked in application forms and interviews. The Guide provides model answers to example questions that could be asked by SMBP alumni to ensure volunteer mentors are confident in providing them with advice.

The Group Mentoring model (alumni are mentored by the group rather than one individual) pioneered by SMBP means that volunteer mentors can regulate their input to accommodate fluctuating work and life commitments; it also enables scaling of the geographic reach of SMBP because we are not dependent on recruiting individual mentors to map against student numbers in each geography we expand into.

I'm looking forward to 2021 when we can get back into our partner workplaces and expand to Cardiff, Rugby, South Cambridgeshire and the North East and increase places in our existing Clusters!”

“We replatformed the SMBP Group Mentoring platform in 2020. Since deployment, we have really seen fantastic enthusiasm and engagement from both students and volunteers on the platform. We admire the great work SMBP and their volunteers do in supporting and developing students who have come onto the platform. Providing students with the tools, network and access to help them succeed is more important now than ever. We are encouraged to see the continued commitment so many volunteers have to increasing social mobility and look forward to growing the initiative at scale across new clusters and geographies.”

**Rory Fleming, Founder, mentorXchange**

mentorXchange

Official  
Group Mentoring  
Partner



# Our Impact on Social Media

This year we took a different approach to our social media channels, where we pushed to have more activity and engagement from our volunteers and partners by maintaining a steady stream of content, planning a schedule on our Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram platforms, and by promoting the hashtag #SMBP2020.



**Eman Ahamed** • 3rd+  
Student | Graphics Designer | Tech Enthusiast  
3mo • 📍

Last week I finished my work insight week with [Google](#) and [Latham & Watkins](#). We focused on 4 key competencies - Leadership, Communication, Creativity and Problem Solving. The sessions were interactive and I enjoyed the case studies a lot.

Thank you SMBP for this amazing insight week!

#SMBP2020



**Simran Kaur Chatha** • 2nd  
First Year Law Undergraduate at Cardiff University | icanyoucantoo Ambassador  
11mo • Edited • 📍

The past decade truly was a life-changing experience for me. I learnt many life skills and lessons which I wish to further develop, in this new decade.

2018/19 especially built and shaped me as an individual, as I learnt from my failures, explored eye-opening opportunities and fulfilled many dreams.

- At the age of 16, as a finalist of the **Big Voice London** Mooting Competition 2019, I was able to fulfill my dream of presenting at the UK Supreme Court, before Lord Kerr as the Senior Appellant.
- Fortunately, I had the prestigious chance to be on the **icanyoucantoo** programme. Thank you to the **icanyoucantoo** team for teaching me key life skills, providing real role models and further giving me the opportunity to be an Ambassador.
- Moreover, I explored many exciting legal opportunities with **Charles Russell Speechlys** and **Social Mobility Business Partnership**. Furthermore, I participated in the **Big Voice London** and **Linklaters White Collar Summer School** and the **InvestIN Education Young Lawyer Summer Weekend**.



**Pearl E.** • 2nd  
First Year LLB Law Student @ University of Leeds | Trainee Adviser - Citizens Adv...  
4mo • Edited • 📍

So today I completed the **Social Mobility Business Partnership Work Experience** for 2020! Now this year (of course) it was all done online, but it definitely didn't detract from the quality of the experience in any way. I was able to receive insightful sessions covering topics of resilience, teamwork and collaboration, recognising micro-aggressions, the role of the media in providing worthwhile news, and networking from **Simply Business**, **BNY Mellon**, and **Dow Jones** (as well as receiving a fantastic introductory session hosted by **Jackie Trench** and **Jessica Rivett**)

I would like to thank all the members of the aforementioned businesses for taking the time out of your week to host, what were super engaging sessions, Jackie Trench for giving me the opportunity to be a part of the SMBP programme for this year, and my fellow Prime alumni & SMF Residential group for making the work experience that much enjoyable!

@smbp\_uk



**James Peacock** @social\_mobility · 5 Aug  
Thoroughly enjoyed today's first ever @SMBP\_UK virtual Insight Day at @DLGroupCareers @DLGroupMedia

[youtu.be/eQtjrquyGeQ](https://youtu.be/eQtjrquyGeQ)

The students were very impressive, loads of great ideas shared throughout the sessions on #Leadership and #communication

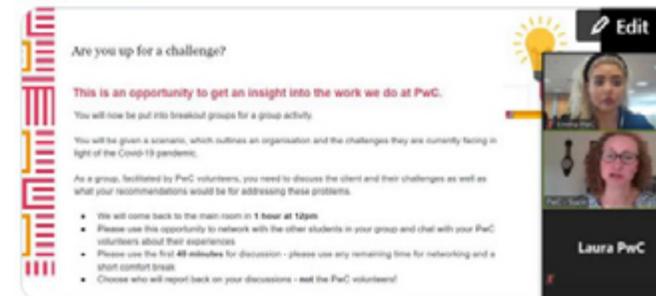


**Martin Lewis** @MartinSLewis · 31 Jul

Just want to send my best wishes to all the pupils on the @SMBP\_UK programme right now. It's an amazing opportunity to get experience in the professions that is normally a closed door. I'm proud to be a patron of the charity. Soak up the info & enjoy



**Emma Roddy** @EmmaRPwC1 · 28 Jul  
Great to help out the team with the @SMBP\_UK Insight day today! Great to interact and engage so many students virtually about all our opportunities! #PwCProud #virtuallearning #socialmobility



**Fliplet: Prefab Apps**  
@flipletapp

@SMBP\_UK's app has revolutionised the way they run their programs. All documents are now digitalised and the great UI really engages their students. Well done 🎉

# SMBP Alumni

## Where Are They Now?

### Joshua Patterson, Class of 2016

I took part in the LSMP, now SMBP, in 2016. I had no real experience of the corporate world and certainly none in the corporate law sphere. I had no prior knowledge of what corporate solicitors did nor any knowledge of how to become a corporate solicitor. The LSMP fuelled my ambition to pursue a career in City law and equipped me with preliminary tools to achieve this. I was able to understand what City solicitors did and the process of going through Vacation Schemes and Training Contract applications.

During my A-levels, I was a carer for my father and missed a significant amount of time at sixth form and on independent study. I subsequently underperformed in my finals and did not make it into a Russell Group university. At this point, I contemplated giving up my hope to become a corporate solicitor. I reached out to several contacts that I made during the LSMP that motivated me to carry on with my legal education and pursue my career aspirations.

During university, I was able to secure places on various City law firm schemes, and my experience from the LSMP was invaluable in helping to attain these. Knowing how a law firm operates as a business was key to securing places on the schemes, and that is what the LSMP taught me and formed the basis for many of my interview questions. I also believe that having the LSMP experience on my CV put me in a much better position compared to the many other applicants.

The resilience and perseverance that was partly instilled through the LSMP paid off as I was offered a Training Contract at City law firm Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner in 2020, to commence in 2022. I would actively encourage any student to firmly grasp the opportunity to take part in the SMBP scheme as I know it paid huge dividends in my journey.



# SMBP Alumni

## Where Are They Now?

### Kerollos Brais, Class of 2018

LSMP (AKA SMBP) is an experience I will always find myself referring to in interviews. Early on within my career, securing such an incredible experience has undoubtedly been one of the most significant incentives. This programme stops you from even thinking of your limits, simply because the amount of support, guidance, and skills you obtain are enough to excel you beyond what you once considered to be your limits.

Before partaking in the SMBP, I always knew that the legal career was where my gut instinct leads me, and I only really began to comprehend and understand the way forward post the SMBP. The week consisted of working alongside high-profile in-house and private legal teams, including American Express, Denton's, and ITV. A specific task I benefitted from at American Express was solving a real-life legal scenario with a group of peers, which required creative problem-solving. I am now able to use my initiative to think and interpret legal context through inductive reasoning critically.

The SMBP proved to be an experience valued by employers when in 2018, I was put through a rigorous selection process for an internship with Bank of America Merrill Lynch. I recollect how the interview panel was rather keen to be enlightened further about my valuable time working with whom were known to them as clients.

Establishing strong interpersonal skills such as oral communication and negotiation skills has equipped me for my Law path. I am lucky enough to have been selected for this brilliant opportunity. As daunting as it sounds, the way employers think has altered over generations. You will need more than just top marks and a determined look on your face to land yourself a job today. It is no longer right to think of a training contract or even a vacation scheme as the first stage in your career. The first stage should be gaining some relevant substantive work experience, and I encourage all individuals not to let such opportunities pass by.



# SMBP Alumni

## Where Are They Now?

### Kim Anh Nguyen, Class of 2019

During my time at SMBP, I had the opportunities to access organisations and professions which I never would have thought I would be able to see.

Not only did the programme allow me to finetune different skills such as teamwork, public speaking and critical thinking, but it also gave me access to inspiring people who each provided us with deeper understandings into life in their respective fields. This allowed me to inform my career choices and feel as though these professions were attainable- it broke down a barrier which I felt has always been there for someone from my traditionally underrepresented background.

It was also during SMBP that I truly learnt how to network through both the sessions and through the representatives from SMBP who made sure that all questions were answered and who had a genuine interest in ensuring that we got as much out of the programme as possible.

It has also helped me to navigate my career-experience at Oxford University and the mentors who I left the programme in contact with were a huge help during my university application process, such that I was able to successfully apply to read Law at Oxford.



# SMBP Alumni

## Where Are They Now?

### Myah Olja, Class of 2019

Participating in SMBP in 2019 was truly an enriching, enjoyable and cultivating experience.

The opportunity to attend insight days at 5 different leading organisations was an unmatched experience; having the opportunity to meet so many new people including those working at the highest level within their profession really helped me to develop my confidence and interpersonal skills.

Each session was highly informative and interesting, and I enjoyed participating in all of the activities we were set. I felt as though my opinions and ideas were valued, in addition to being enlightened by the viewpoints of others. SMBP completely dispelled any preconceptions that I had of not fitting in city firms!

The employees running the insight days were all very friendly and approachable, as well as very knowledgeable as they answered all of our questions above and beyond! In addition, the other students participating were very kind and encouraging. My experience was so lovely!

For me, the most uplifting part of SMBP was realising the support network that is available for you. I have met some of the most incredible and kind individuals that I have ever come across, who have inspired me to likewise help others.

The amount of thought and effort that had been put into organising and running the week has certainly not gone unnoticed, I am so grateful to have been able to participate. I hope that other students choose to apply and benefit from the opportunity as it truly is second to none.

Upon completing the scheme, I feel more motivated than ever to complete my A-Levels and apply to university. I also look forward to applying to undergraduate schemes and in the near future, training contracts - a prospect I wouldn't have previously considered viable for myself otherwise!



A message from the SMBP Patrons...

**A huge thank you to everyone involved,  
bring on 2021!**



**Martin Lewis OBE**  
Money Saving Expert



**Helen Mahy CBE**  
Non-Exec Director, SSE plc and  
Equality & Human Rights  
Commissioner



**Baroness Prashar of  
Runnymede CBE**  
House of Lords



**Mark Soden**  
Managing Director,  
Cleartrack Performance



**Jordan Turner-Hall**  
Academy Coach,  
Harlequins

