

6th February 2020

Dear Newnham US Committee,

I am applying to the Newnham US Committee's Travel Bursary to fund my travel and living costs for an internship in the Executive Director's Office of UN Women in New York City.

I will be graduating from Newnham this June having studied Politics and Sociology in the Human, Social and Political Science Tripos. I am thrilled at the prospect of commencing my professional career in an organisation dedicated to the empowerment of women and girls worldwide, however, this internship is currently unmanageable given my financial circumstances. As such, I would be so grateful to the Newnham US Committee for making this invaluable opportunity possible.

#### Interning at UN Women

I firmly believe in the principles upon which UN Women is premised. This year I have been part of the founding committee for the Cambridge chapter of the new UN Women UK University Champions Network, a network of young leaders seeking to promote UN Women campaigns and values across British universities.

As an intern, I will be working directly under Alison Rowe, Senior Senior Communications Advisor and Speechwriter to the Executive Director of UN Women, who is herself a Newnham Alumna. Previous interns have been given tasks such as summarising dossiers, researching and writing reports and planning events. For example, one intern co-authored a discussion paper on trafficking and sexual exploitation. Another was tasked with the project of researching how to make the Sustainable Development Goals appeal to young people.

To achieve this, they undertook a series of interviews and focus groups and used the findings of these to produce a 'toolkit' of materials.

These were disseminated to the UN Women's regional and country offices for communications staff globally to use in conducting the same research in their respective locations.



The view from the UN Women offices in New York City

### Commitment to a career in journalism / public policy

I am interested in pursuing a career in journalism or public policy. The internship's research and communications focus makes it a perfect fit to explore these two professional fields.

I have long displayed a commitment to a career in journalism, and I firmly believe in the continued importance of good reportage on inequalities and injustices, especially in an era where fake news is rampant. In highschool I served as first a columnist and later as editor-in-chief of our college newspaper, leading a team of students in the production of a bi-weekly print edition of the paper. Whilst at Cambridge I have balanced my studies with extensive student journalism across audio, digital and print platforms. I have held various contributor and editorial positions within *Varsity*, Cambridge's main student newspaper including Opinion Editor, Interviews Editor, Staff Opinion Writer and Podcast Producer. During my second year at Cambridge I also co-hosted a weekly radio show on local radio station Cam.FM.



Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the Executive Director of UN Women. I would intern in her office

I have a keen interest in issues of gender inequality, as such my student journalism has been largely on topics pertaining to women's issues. My radio show was called '*Cam.FEM on Cam.FM*' and consisted of women-oriented current events and original culture content. Each week I independently identified relevant global affairs, researched up-and-coming female artists and actively sought out key feminist figures, who I then interviewed on the show.

Similarly, for *Varsity* I produced a podcast interviewing the curators of *The Rising Tide*, an exhibit in the University Library containing historical artefacts documenting the history of women in Cambridge, in commemoration of 150 years since the founding of the first Cambridge women's college (which was Girton - Newnham followed soon after!). Whilst Interviews Editor I also interviewed feminist economist Dr Victoria Bateman on 'the cult of female modesty'.

In addition to audio journalism, I have been deeply committed to reporting on women's issues on print and digital platforms as well. During my 2018 tenure as Opinion Editor of *Varsity* I put forward the idea of dedicating the Opinion section of the edition of the paper coinciding with International Women's Day to articles by female authors writing on issues pertaining to gender inequality. *Varsity* repeated this feature in 2019 and plans to do so for the current year. In addition, during my tenure as Senior News Correspondent of *Varsity* I conducted an independent investigation into access to contraception in the city. As a young woman this is a topic of personal interest to me and my peers. After interviewing students and healthcare professionals I revealed how high prices, long wait times and long travel distances were inhibiting female students' access to contraception in Cambridge.

I have demonstrated an ability to work consistently to a high journalistic standard, which recently culminated in paid work on the foreign desk at *The Sunday Times* whilst I was still an undergraduate. In my second year I interviewed Louise Callaghan, Middle East Correspondent for *The Sunday Times* for *Varsity*. Impressed by my interview, Ms Callaghan put me forward for work experience with *The Sunday Times* which I undertook on the News Review desk in summer 2019. This was unpaid, and only made possible by a bursary from the Cambridge University Careers Centre. Following this stint of work experience I was asked to do paid cover work on the foreign desk.

### Keen interest in gender studies

I have tailored my undergraduate program in Politics and Sociology to pursue my academic interest in gender studies. To date, all the essays I have researched and written for my Politics and Gender paper have received first class marks. Professor Jude Browne, Director of the University of Cambridge Centre for Gender Studies, wrote for my report for the Politics and Gender paper from Michaelmas Term 2019, *“Isabelle was one of the very best students on this paper - Politics and Gender POL 18. She made extremely insightful comments and her essays were all first class. Excellent all round.”*

My keen interest in women’s issues extends beyond the academic realm to the field of advocacy. I was part of a university-wide campaign last year that criticised the lack of representation for working class female students at Cambridge and advocated for the introduction of a representative for working-class female students into the Executive Committee of the Student Union’s Women’s Campaign. My *Varsity* [article](#) advocating for the introduction of this role received over 250 shares online and the role was created following a vote by the Student Union’s Women’s Campaign.



Alison Rowe, Senior Communications Advisor in the Executive Director’s Office. I would intern directly beneath her. She went to Newnham too!

My experiences to date have made me certain that I want to gain further insight into a career in public policy or journalism focused on women’s issues. I would relish the opportunity to do so at an organisation like UN Women that is so committed to international gender equality. As an intern in the Executive Director’s Office I will continue to exercise the ethos of hard work and diligence I have displayed so far across my academic, advocacy and journalistic endeavours.

### What the Bursary will enable

The internship will not be possible without external funding. Unlike many of my peers, I have received no financial support from my parents for my studies, instead paying for them through a combination of student loans, generous bursaries from Newnham and savings from part-time jobs which I have worked since age 14. I have also spent the summers between each academic year at Cambridge working to support myself. The internship is 2-6 months in duration. I would ideally like to undertake the full six months of the internship in order to be able to make the most of the experience of working in such an important and impactful organisation (the two month minimum is for interns who are resuming studies after the summer). Interns receive a “small daily stipend” (actual amount to be confirmed) but this will not cover the combined cost of flights to and from New York, rent, health insurance, food and daily commuting costs.

Please see my attached budget for how I would spend the Travel Bursary provided by the Newnham US Committee. I will seek alternative means of funding to cover the remaining costs, or shorten the length of the internship if necessary and permitted by UN Women.

I am so excited at the opportunity of commencing my career at an organisation which seeks to promote the empowerment of women worldwide, and I would be so grateful to the Committee for enabling me to do so. Should I be granted the bursary, I will make every effort to continue to uphold the commitment to supporting and promoting women that I have seen during my three years at Newnham.

Thank you very much for your consideration,

Belle George



**Newnham US Committee's Travel Bursary BUDGET**  
**Belle George**

**Expenses for 6 month internship with UN Women**

<b>Expense (calculated for 6 month period)</b>	<b>Estimated cost (Dollars and Pounds)</b>
Return flights London-New York	\$500 (£400)
Rent in New York	\$1000 per month, total \$6000 for 6 months (£4650)
Utilities (electricity, heating, water, internet)	\$150 per month, total \$900 for 6 months (£700)
Health Insurance	\$650 per month, total \$3900 (£3000)
Food	\$350 per month, total \$2100 (£1600)
Daily Commuting Costs	\$125 per month, total \$750 for 6 months (£580)
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$14,000 (£11,000)</b>

**Covering the difference in costs**

Evidently, living in New York is incredibly expensive and as such I won't be able to undertake the internship without additional financial support. I know the Newnham US Committee's Travel Bursary is \$4000 - should I be awarded it, I would seek to find other sources of funding to cover the remaining costs. If unsuccessful in finding other funding, I would ask to shorten the length of the internship.