

Our Golden Thread

Our impact in the World

Dan Barcroft

Director - Marketing Admissions Recruitment and Communications



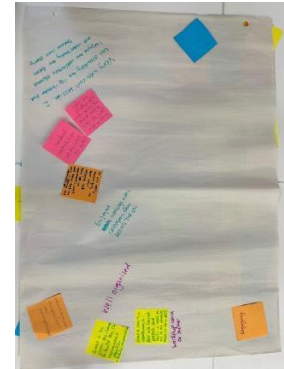
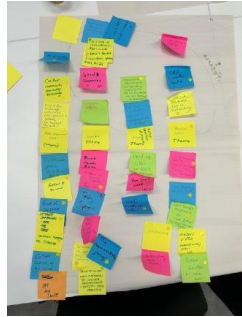


- **Insight and understanding into audience views, expectations and contradictions around HE critical to successful positioning of our reputation campaign**
- **Reputation study - interviews with key audiences**
- **Brand tracker - useful comparison, shows sector increases and declines in perceptions as well as institutional**
- **Audience testing of campaigns/concepts for golden thread revealed views on HE generally as well as our own brand**

- **Real and rich engagement internally has helped build strength in showcasing authentic impact across our Marketing and Communications.**
- **The aim is to show the world changing impact that HE has - *‘when you demonstrate impact, we all benefit’* - could collaboration across the sector help to further make the case to the public about our value?**
- **Further detail on the audience profiles is required to support enhanced targeting and development across our five year roadmap.**



8 workshops
245 attendees
Staff, students, alumni



70+ stories

Social responsibility and global impact

Collaborations with organisations like Student Action for Refugees Sheffield, Ukrainians in Great Britain, and Rehala Trust to support refugees and asylum seekers.

Projects that offer library access to asylum seekers and provide English lessons to Afghan women.

Management school initiatives like the Young Change Makers Project for displaced young people.

Desert Garden Project: A hydroponics project helping Syrian refugees grow food in refugee camps, offering a sense of autonomy and purpose.

Bummit Charity Hitchhike: A charity hitchhiking event organised by students to raise money for various charities, including local Sheffield charities, and raise awareness within the community. This activity reinforces the students' commitment to social causes and giving back to the community.

Julia Garnum Centre: The university's genomics facility, which collaborates with local hospitals and supports rare disease diagnostics. The centre's work benefits both local and global communities by connecting families affected by rare diseases worldwide.

Inclusive Design Principles:

Developing accessible, inclusive design standards for new buildings and refurbishments to accommodate physical, mental, spiritual, and ideological needs, demonstrating a commitment to inclusivity and well-being.

Krebs Cycle Legacy: Sir Hans Krebs' research on cellular respiration (the Krebs Cycle) originated in Sheffield, contributing to significant scientific advancement and impacting modern health by linking mitochondria to major diseases.

Tofersen for Motor Neurone Disease: Translational research led by Professor Dame Pamela Shaw has brought a breakthrough treatment for an inherited form of motor neurone disease, globally impacting patient care and advancing neuroscience.

Female hygiene project: Addressing hygiene issues in India, a powerful example of social responsibility reaching beyond the UK.

Climate change mitigation: Efforts in various projects to address and mitigate climate change impacts in different countries, emphasising global thinking.

Place-based learning internships: These connect students to local businesses, supporting Sheffield's local economy and disadvantaged students, which also links to social responsibility.

Live projects in architecture: Architecture students engage with local communities, working on real-life projects for community buildings. This provides practical experience while helping the community feel valued and supported, reflecting Sheffield's commitment to social responsibility.

Sheffield scanner: Funded by donations, the scanner benefits local patients by providing easier access to health diagnostics, highlighting the university's role in enhancing regional healthcare.

Flying Futures Programme: This project, supported by the Royal Academy of Engineering, brings STEM activities to primary schools.

Centre for Equity and Inclusion: Recently established by academics of colour, this centre provides support for postgraduate researchers, encouraging activism and creating a space for independent thought. It reflects Sheffield's tradition of non-conformity, social justice, and openness to challenge institutional norms.

A home for international students: Consistently praised by alumni as a welcoming environment for international students, creating a global community.

Long-lasting connections and roots: Many alumni met lifelong friends, partners, and professional networks at Sheffield, creating a strong, shared sense of community and support.

Alumni engagement in local projects: Alumni continue to engage with local initiatives like Greater Sheffield Green and the Barbican Project, showing long-term cultural integration and commitment to Sheffield.

Community and cultural integration

Integration with the city enables Sheffield to showcase its strengths and attract people who often choose to stay long-term.

"Home Away from Home": The participants spoke about the university's role in creating a sense of home and community through friendships, professional relationships, and societies.

Peregrine Falcon Webcam: The university's webcam project for peregrine falcons nesting on campus brings joy and awareness to students, staff, and the wider community. It also contributes to biodiversity and public knowledge, creating a unique link between the university and the Sheffield community.

AMRC's Impact on Local Industry: The presence of industry leaders like Boeing and McLaren at the AMRC brings economic growth, job opportunities, and upskilling for residents, strengthening the university's connection to Sheffield's industrial roots.

Apprenticeship Programmes: The university's apprenticeships, especially through the MRC Training Centre, provide young people in South Yorkshire with well-paid, skilled job opportunities, demonstrating a commitment to community support and economic integration.

A home for international students: Consistently praised by alumni as a welcoming environment for international students, creating a global community.

Long-lasting connections and roots: Many alumni met lifelong friends, partners, and professional networks at Sheffield, creating a strong, shared sense of community and support.

Alumni engagement in local projects: Alumni continue to engage with local initiatives like Greater Sheffield Green and the Barbican Project, showing long-term cultural integration and commitment to Sheffield.

Off the Shelf Festival: The university's library hosts events as part of the Off the Shelf literary festival, a cultural experience that brings Sheffield's residents and visitors into university spaces, fostering a sense of pride and belonging. It highlights Sheffield as a cultural hub in a region where cultural events are often centralised in other cities like Manchester or London.

Festival of the Mind: This festival engages the public in Sheffield with university research through partnerships with local artists and creatives. It showcases Sheffield's research impact, creative collaboration, and a commitment to making research accessible and relevant to the public.

The City

Sheffield's Unique Student City Character: Students noted that the presence of the university creates a vibrant, distinct character for Sheffield, which would feel empty without them. The student population brings life, diversity, and economic support to the city, making it an integral part of Sheffield's identity.

Local Impact of Student Volunteering: Student involvement in local charities and organisations benefits Sheffield's community, strengthening the university's role as a central pillar of the city.

Sheffield's Student Character: The presence of international students and diverse communities enriches Sheffield's culture and economy. The city would feel different without the university, as it brings a sense of vibrancy, diversity, and openness.

Local Economic Impact: The AMRC's work with global brands contributes to local economic growth, supporting the supply chain, creating jobs, and attracting inward investment. The university serves as a "connector" of civic partnerships to benefit the region.

Generosity and Safety: The university's role as a safe and generous institution reinforces Sheffield as a welcoming and open city, with participants describing it as a place of "sanctuary."

Distinctive architecture as a 'North Star': The Arts Tower was mentioned as a landmark that helps alumni feel connected to the city.

Local scholarships: Financial support targeted at Sheffield students, which fosters a sense of loyalty and belonging to the city.

"Made in Sheffield" identity: The university's connection to Sheffield's industrial heritage and commitment to regional economic growth was noted as a point of pride for alumni.

Participants reflected on how Sheffield's identity as a "city of makers" and its architectural landmarks contribute to a strong sense of place and pride. The university's historic role in the city, from its origins to current contributions, is seen as integral to Sheffield's cultural and economic landscape.

Practical learning and hands-on experience

Forge Makerspace: The first student-led makerspace in the UK, initiated by students who saw similar spaces in the US. It gives students practical experience, fosters employability, and provides the community with beneficial projects. This reinforces the university's reputation for supporting practical, student-driven innovation.

AMRC (Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre): Created in collaboration with regional and international partners, the AMRC provides pathways for local students and graduates into advanced manufacturing roles, connecting Sheffield's historical industrial roots with modern innovation.

Innovation and entrepreneurial spirit

Projects where students operate like SMEs (small to medium-sized enterprises), fostering an entrepreneurial mindset.

Examples include the Sunrise rocket launch and engineering teams like the Formula One project, where students fundraise and manage initiatives independently.

Student Union Activities and Voting: The emphasis on student voices and their engagement in voting to maintain a top-rated student union reflects a culture of empowerment and ownership over their university experience, encouraging an entrepreneurial mindset.

Maker Futures: A project in the School of Education that combines STEM and arts-based learning to empower children and teachers. The "Maker Bus" initiative encourages creative problem-solving, resilience, and hands-on learning in diverse educational settings, such as schools, museums, and libraries.

PGR Community Building: The merging of two departments with different disciplinary focuses (Information Science/Data Science and Journalism/Media) encouraged postgraduate students to take the lead in organising a hybrid symposium, fostering leadership and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC): The university's model for near-industry research and technology translation supports local and global industries through research-driven innovation and collaboration.

Multidisciplinary projects in engineering: Alumni praised the University for fostering innovative, forward-thinking solutions, especially in addressing environmental and social challenges in diverse cultural contexts.

Japanese Studies Centre: An innovative and early example of diverse academic offerings that shaped graduates' lives.

Urban horticulture and climate-resilient planting: The development of sustainable planting techniques by professors in Landscape Architecture influenced major projects like the London 2012 Olympics and Tower of London, showcasing cutting-edge work in climate resilience.

Spin-out Company: Starting in the 1980s, a spin-out company led to a global presence and a return of alumni to Sheffield to give back. This story reflects Sheffield's culture of commercialising research, creating global impact, and maintaining ties to their careers and personal lives.

its origins, especially with individuals choosing to stay connected to the North rather than relocating.

Forge Makerspace: Student-led Innovation Hub: The Forge is a makerspace available to all students, not just engineering, allowing them to experiment with traditional and advanced technologies. This space fosters hands-on learning, trial and error, and a culture of empowerment and trust, supported by alumni and corporate funding. It aligns with Sheffield's "making" heritage.

Henderson's Rooftop Project: When a local landmark (Henderson's) was repurposed, staff preserved roof tiles, embodied them, and sold them to fund scholarships.

Hope and Purpose

Research projects, including Motor Neurone Disease (MND) studies, inspire hope and positively impact people's lives, fostering a sense of purpose within the community.

Apprenticeship Success Stories: The apprenticeship programmes transform the life chances of young people, with participants expressing that they feel "set up for life" through the skills and opportunities they gain.

Student-Led Projects: The university's commitment to enabling student-led projects and taking their input seriously creates a sense of empowerment, responsibility, and purpose, contributing to high levels of student satisfaction.

University of Sanctuary: Participants referred to the university as a "sanctuary" and a safe, international space, emphasising its role in fostering an environment of generosity, security, and support.

Career guidance and mentorship: Alumni noted the positive, long-term impact of personalised career coaching and mentorship provided by the University.

Transformative experience: Alumni from various generations consistently expressed how Sheffield helped them discover purpose and direction in their careers and personal lives.

Civic institution role: Alumni highlighted Sheffield's role as a civic institution that goes beyond education, shaping the city and providing a 'home away from home' feeling.

Experience

Student Union Achievements: The university's student union, voted the best for seven years, provides students with a sense of purpose and opportunities to make a difference. Students highlighted the value of having access to a supportive, empowering space that helps them explore their future options and contribute positively.

Cultural and economic vibrancy

The university's economic and cultural impact on Sheffield provides vibrancy, diversity, and support to local businesses and organisations.

Students as City contributors: The influx of students supports local businesses, enriches cultural diversity, and brings vibrancy to the city. The economic impact of student spending and university investments in infrastructure further boosts Sheffield's economic and social ecosystem.

Employment and local opportunities: The university's role in offering employment, training, and internships through initiatives like the AMRC apprenticeships provides critical opportunities for Sheffield residents, promoting social mobility.



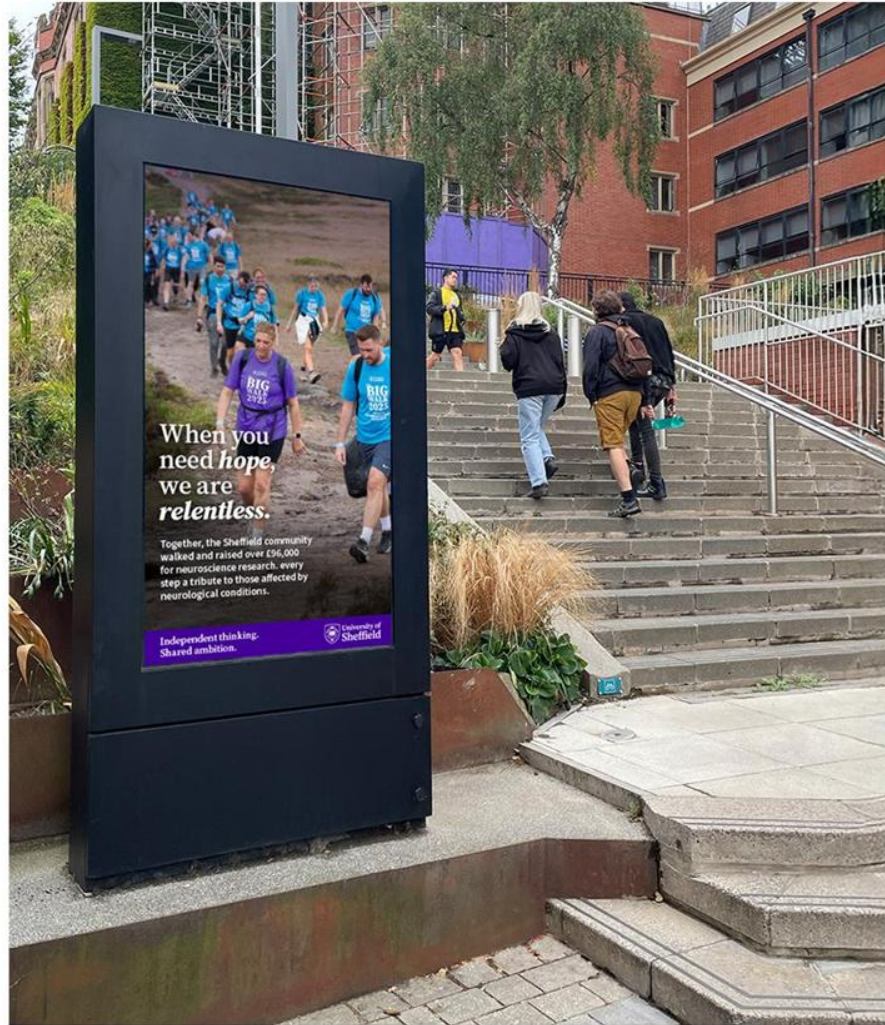
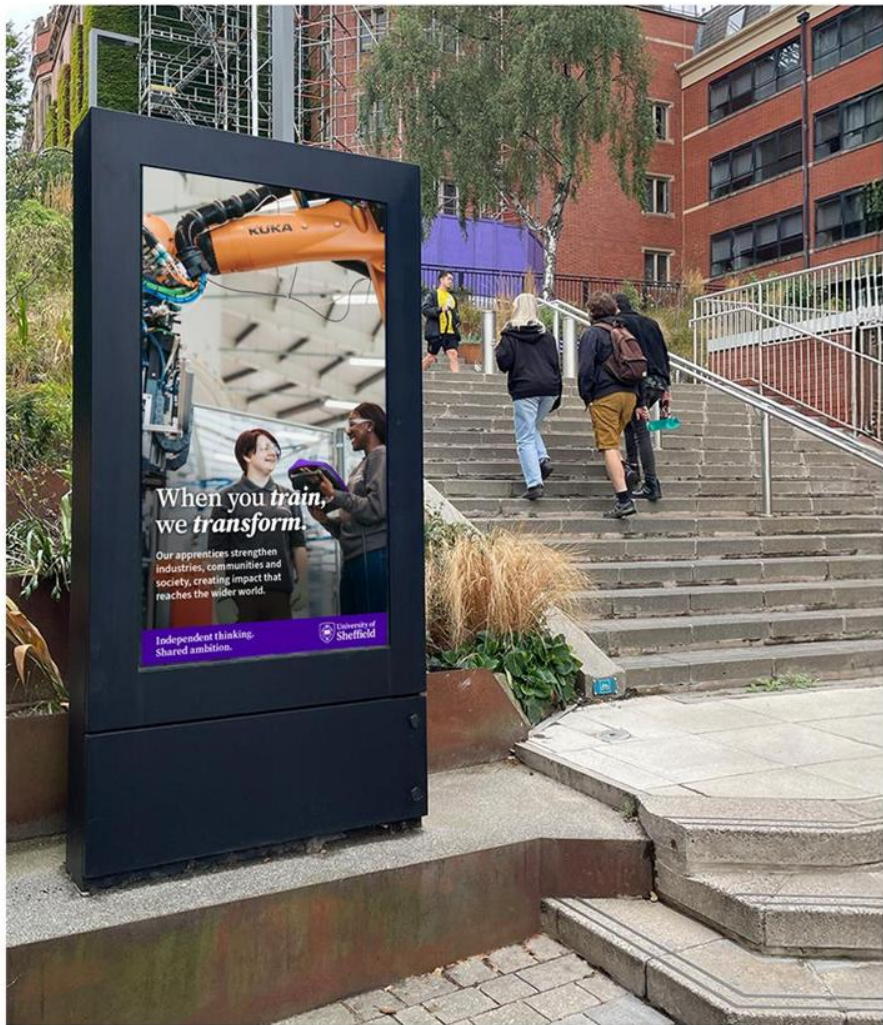
When you give an *hour*,
we change a *lifetime*.

Every year, Sheffield students volunteer thousands of hours at food banks, care homes, refugee charities, schools and allotments.

Independent thinking. Shared ambition.



University of
Sheffield



Independent thinking. Shared ambition.






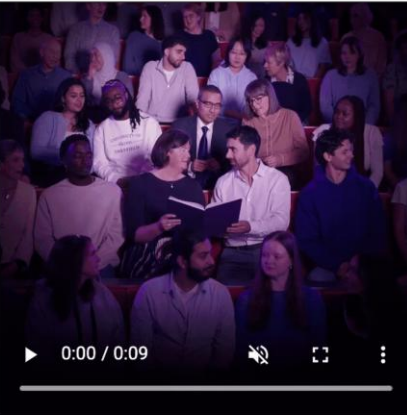
University of
Sheffield

We went live with a campaign
to target academics and
employers globally

Audience focus - neuroscience academics

 **The University of Sheffield** Promoted

Our pioneering neuroscience research is delivering breakthroughs in Alzheimer's & ALS. We're developing new treatments for brain and nerve health.




0:00 / 0:09

Independent thinking.
Shared ambition. [Learn more](#)

15 1 comment 1 share

Like Comment Share Send




 **Mimoun Azzouz** Professor and Director of GTIMC, Founding Director and CSO of BlackfinBio, Co-Founde... 1w


There's a unique, profound satisfaction to witnessing a scientific discovery progress into life-changing treatment.

We have developed a novel adeno-associated virus (AAV) gene therapy to treat Hereditary Spastic Paraplegia, Type 47 (SPG47), a rare and devastating neurodevelopmental disorder.

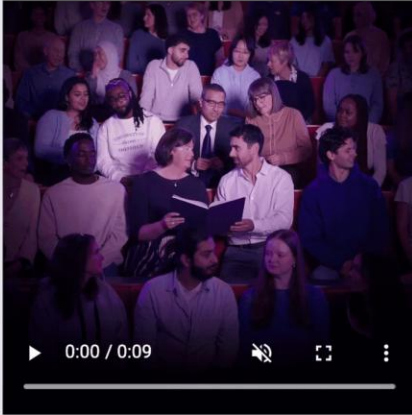
What began in the lab is now finally going to clinical trials.

 253 · 33 Comments

Audience focus - clean energy academics

 **The University of Sheffield** Promoted

From sustainable aviation fuels to semiconductors - we're pioneering clean energy research in Sheffield to power a net-zero future.




0:00 / 0:09

Independent thinking. Shared ambition. [Learn more](#)

15 1 comment 1 share

Like Comment Share Send

 **S.C. Lenny Koh**
Professor, Director of LSCM and CEES and Associate Dean
1w

To build a truly sustainable future, we must first transform our supply chains.

We live in a world where global disruptions are no longer theoretical. A simple chip shortage can halt production lines worldwide. A disruption to the energy grid can bring an entire airport to a standstill. These are not isolated incidents; they are signals that our old models are no longer sufficient. The scarcity of critical materials, geopolitical tensions, and climate change are all factors that can - and do - expose the vulnerabilities of our interconnected systems.



 51 · 2 Comments

External campaign - headline 10 day results

- Campaign has reached 394K targeted academics and employers so far.
- Over 670 signs ups to the research newsletter.
- Email open rate 53% vs a 30% benchmark.
- Hero film has an excellent 78% view through rate (viewing the video to the end) - the benchmark is 35%.
- LinkedIn (a major channel we are using) is seeing a 0.65% click through beating its benchmark of 0.5% and previous awareness campaign high of 0.45%.