
Annual Review 2011

Contents

The Social Mobility Foundation Annual Review 2011

About us	3
Our work	5
Mentoring	7
Internships	9
Developing skills	10
University advice	11
New projects and other highlights	12
Student profiles	14
Public profile and Trustees	15
Working with us	16



About us

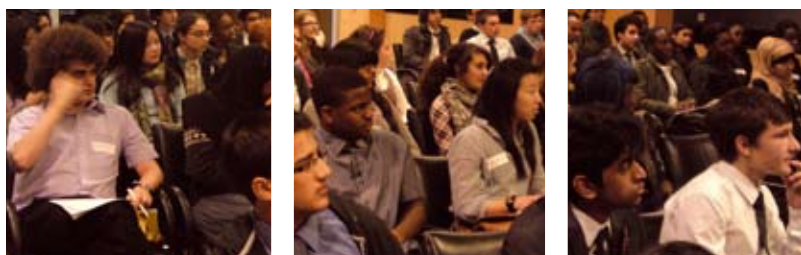
The Social Mobility Foundation (SMF) is a charity which aims to make a practical improvement in social mobility for young people from low-income backgrounds. Our aim is the creation of a nationwide framework whereby all young people from low-income backgrounds have access to complementary supports which help them plan their professional future.

Trustees' message

2011 has been a fantastic year for the Social Mobility Foundation and we decided to produce an annual review for the first time to share some of the highlights.

During the course of the year, we have supported a new cohort of 650 young people with the most extensive Aspiring Professionals Programme yet. The SMF is now supported by well over 200 employers, and 2011 has seen a number of prestigious employers begin supporting our work for the first time, including Linklaters, Deloitte and Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer. A further group of employers has committed to support us in 2012 and we look forward to them contributing to our activities.

Our work has received very wide coverage in 2011, including in a BBC2 documentary on access to the professions. We are very pleased to have been chosen to coordinate new projects such as the Speaker's Parliamentary Placements Scheme and the Whitehall Social Mobility Internship Programme and anticipate 2012 being a year in which we go from strength to strength. On reading the outcomes for the young people we work with throughout this review, we hope you'll agree what we do has never been more important or worthy of your support.



Above: Students at an Interview Skills Session hosted by Clifford Chance

“ The Internship that the SMF provided me with was one of the best opportunities I've been given, it helped me to grow as a person and for the first time, I was actually excited about my future. —Zeynep ”

650

new students
supported in 2011



Above: Students on internship at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

“Colleagues are always very impressed by the enthusiasm and attitude of the SMF students and there is always huge appetite to host the placements.” —Barclays

IND OF FUN

TO DO THE IMPOSSIBLE.

WALT DISNEY (1901 - 1966)



KINGS
OF
LONDON

Our work

Our Aspiring Professionals Programme (APP) aims to support young people to fulfil their potential and enter top universities and professions by providing them with a mentor, internships, university application support and skills development sessions. Having worked with 59 students in 2006 and 510 in 2010, the SMF had 650 new participants in its 2011 cohort, who have so far been enjoying the most substantial offer of activities in the SMF's history.

Who we work with

STUDENTS

The SMF begins working with students in their first year of sixth-form, when they are 16-17 years old. To qualify for our Aspiring Professionals Programme of mentoring, internships, university application support and skills development, every student must:

- Be predicted at least ABB at A-Level
- Have at least five A grades at GCSE, then **EITHER**
- Be eligible for free school meals (household income less than £16,190)

OR

- Be the first generation in their family to attend university, having attended a state school where a higher than average percentage of pupils are eligible for free school meals

SECTORS & FIRMS

The SMF currently targets those businesses and professions which have a very influential role in the UK but which are difficult for the young people we target to enter without the programme of support we provide. The current target areas are grouped as follows: Accountancy, Architecture, Banking/Finance, Business, Engineering, Law, Media, Medicine, Politics, Science and Technology.

Where we work

Our current target cities are Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester and Nottingham. Ultimately we aim to serve the cohort we target nationally and to create a self-sustaining network of people in our target professions who in turn support young people from similar backgrounds to their own.

“ The SMF have an excellent understanding of the challenges forming both sides of the social mobility equation. Their ability to bridge that divide is second to none and we are delighted that they form such a key part of Linklaters' commitment to ensuring fair access for all. —Linklaters ”

More than

85%

of our students
are from an ethnic
minority

More than

80%

of our students have
parents who did not
go to university

Prior to undertaking an
internship within the student's
chosen profession,

46% thought the majority
of employees would be
privately educated

49% thought the majority
of employees would be
middle class

52% thought the majority
of employees would be
graduates of Oxbridge *



Mentoring

Every APP participant is matched with a mentor from the profession they aspire to join. 2011 has seen more interaction between pairs than ever before, with over 12,000 messages being exchanged between mentors and mentees within the first six months of the mentoring year.

Every student on the APP is matched with a mentor who commits to mentor them for a minimum of 12 months. The mentoring takes place predominantly online via email, but we facilitate occasional face to face meetings to build rapport. SMF Mentors are a very diverse group of professionals, ranging from trainees and recent graduates to managing directors and senior partners; the key requirement is that they can act as a positive role model for their mentee and provide appropriate guidance to help them make informed education and career choices.

IN FOCUS

Hannah, a trainee accountant at Deloitte, was matched with Kathleen, a 2011 APP student who aspires to be an accountant.

HANNAH

Q Why did you become a mentor?

A "I met someone through work who was a mentor for the SMF and, as I had done a bit of mentoring at school and because I understand how hard it is to get into university if you don't have someone to guide you, I volunteered to become a mentor. I can empathise with the students because I know that there is so much information out there and so it is good to have someone to get real advice from, rather than taking it from a website, which is not specific to you.

Q What are the benefits of mentoring?

"I find mentoring really satisfying as I get to see how my mentee, Kathleen, has grown and to see her during her internship at Deloitte, where her skills really developed. It is also interesting to see her opinions change as, before she started the APP with the SMF, she wanted to do maths, but now she will be applying to do accountancy at university, which I can help her with as I am currently training to be an accountant."

KATHLEEN

Q What has your mentor helped you with?

"I had gone to a taster course in maths, but I didn't enjoy that and so I thought about studying accounting, which my mentor, Hannah, helped me to decide on. She has given me advice on how to get into accounting as well as helping me with my personal statement and university choices."



Above: Kathleen and Hannah



Above and below: Mentors helping their mentees with their university personal statements at 2011's September Mentor-Mentee Meet-up, hosted by Baker & McKenzie





"This internship was an amazing opportunity. It's not often students from areas such as the one I live in are presented with the chance to work within top professions and it exceeded my expectations of what I believed I could gain from an internship."—Laura

Internships

The SMF organises short internships during the holiday periods to give young people a real insight into their chosen profession and help them decide if it really is for them. Having provided 59 internships in 2006 and 425 in 2010, the SMF secured over 560 internships in 2011 in a host of prestigious organisations across its target sectors.

IN FOCUS

BAR PLACEMENT WEEK

For the 5th year running, the SMF worked with the Bar Council to provide Bar Placement week, in which over 50 barristers' chambers hosted an SMF student to provide an insight into a career at the Bar. The packed week of activities began in the Great Hall of Lincoln's Inn with a series of talks on different aspects of life as a barrister. After lunch, students were met by the barrister who would look after them at their chambers for the remainder of the week, before the whole group visited a court on Friday to question a judge. After the students had competed against each other in a mooted competition, the week was rounded off with a reception with the Chairman of the Bar.

IN FOCUS

MP PLACEMENTS

For the first time, the SMF asked David Cameron, Ed Miliband and Nick Clegg to encourage their party's MPs to host an SMF student for a week at their parliamentary office in Westminster. The purpose of the initiative was to broaden the horizons of students and give them experience of British politics, irrespective of their chosen career. We were delighted that over 150 MPs – including party leaders and a number of Cabinet Ministers – agreed to do this, and the feedback from both MPs and students has been very positive. We plan to expand the initiative in 2012.

IN FOCUS

MEDICAL PLACEMENTS

This year the SMF offered medical placements to 83 of our budding doctors in hospitals and GP practices across the country. As well as working with long standing supporters such as University College London Hospital – who provided 29 internships and 6 places on their Summer School – we have developed new relationships with local GP practices in London and healthcare providers in Nottingham. Our medical placements offer students an opportunity to shadow medical staff in a variety of settings and learn about the day to day working lives of healthcare professionals.

95%

of students felt they couldn't have got an internship at the organisation they were placed at without the SMF*



Above: Inez talking with Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP during the October MP Placement week

87%

of employers felt that the students they hosted through the SMF were of the calibre they would employ after university*

Developing skills

One of the key aspects of the APP is to help participants develop the skills they need to enter their chosen profession, particularly the soft skills that help prospective employees stand out. The number of events organised by the SMF has increased considerably in 2011, with over 30 different events arranged to provide insight to particular universities/careers or develop the skills of APP participants.

Skills Sessions and Career Insight Days

In 2011, the SMF has coordinated and delivered a series of large scale events, such as **Making an Impression Workshops** and **Interview Skills Sessions**.

We also arrange more tailored sector-specific events in conjunction with supportive employers:

- In April, 32 students attended the Guardian's **Media Futures Event** and were provided with talks on the different strands of media and how they can enter the profession. Speakers included a BBC and Channel 4 script writer, a BBC Radio producer and the Observer's Policy Editor.
- In June, Deloitte hosted an **Accountancy day** for 47 students, giving our students insights into tax, audit and consultancy roles within the profession. With this knowledge, students undertook a consultancy task to help them put into practice what they learnt on the day.
- In August, Scottish and Southern Energy's Central Research Unit organised two **Zero Carbon Home Development days** for 18 students, where the students learnt about the future for homes and energy, touring a carbon-free house.

Such days help the students to better understand the profession they aspire to enter, helping them to appreciate the practicalities required to achieve their career ambitions.

Below left: Interview skills training hosted by Barclays

Below centre: Interview skills training hosted by Clifford Chance

Below right: Making an Impression Workshop hosted by Baker & McKenzie



"It definitely made me realise I do have the potential to go to these universities."

Each employer engagement activity has been calculated to be worth

£750
in salary¹

"I enjoyed the networking and learnt some new things from the experience of the speakers."

University advice

In 2011, the SMF took young people to visit 10 universities across the country – such as Sheffield, Manchester, Nottingham, Oxford and Cambridge – as part of a broader engagement with 21 universities, including 14 of the 20 Russell Group universities.

The SMF provides additional support for young people to help them enhance their applications to university. Support includes organising a university and careers fair, workshops on Oxbridge and the Russell Group universities, the BMAT (BioMedical Admissions Test), LNAT (Law National Admissions Test) and university interviews, along with a personal statement checking service.

- Students who are privately educated are 55 times more likely to go to Oxbridge than state school students who qualify for Free School Meals²;
- 27 SMF students from the 2010 APP cohort began studying at Oxbridge in October 2011.*
- In the last five years, 53% of SMF students have gone to Russell Group universities, with the remaining going to excellent non-Russell Group universities such as Durham, Exeter and Queen Mary College, London.*
- APP students achieved over 1000 A grades at AS Level and over 650 A grades at A-Level in the summer of 2011.*

Below: University and Careers Fair, hosted by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales



18%

of pupils in non-selective state schools in England were accepted by the 30 most highly selective universities³

In contrast,

56%

of APP students in non-selective state schools progressed to the same 30 most highly selective universities in 2011*

IN FOCUS

SKILLS TO SUCCEED

In an extension of our work to develop the skills of young people, Accenture will be delivering a 6-module training course to over 450 SMF students in the next 3 years. A part of Accenture's global Skills to Succeed Programme, over 300 Accenture employees have volunteered to deliver training on interview skills/ CV writing, effective communications, having presence, leadership fundamentals, time management and teambuilding, the 6 most popular topics chosen by APP participants. The impact of the course will be measured both during the course and one year after it has been completed by participants and we look forward to reviewing progress.

²The Sutton Trust, *Responding to the new landscape for university access*, December 2010

³The Sutton Trust, *Degrees of Success: University Chances by Individual School*, July 2011

New projects and other highlights

In addition to all of the APP activities provided in 2011, the SMF is delighted to have coordinated brand new projects to provide access to our target professions, such as the Speaker's Parliamentary Placements Scheme and Whitehall Social Mobility Internship Programme. We have also worked with existing supporters to provide unique opportunities to APP students and run our first fundraising dinner.

Speaker's Parliamentary Placements Scheme

Working with the Speaker of the House of Commons and an MP from each of the three main parties (Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP, Eric Ollerenshaw MP and Jo Swinson MP), the SMF was very pleased to coordinate the first ever Speaker's Parliamentary Placements Scheme.

Designed to open parliament up for those passionate about politics but who cannot afford to undertake unpaid internships to get their foot on the ladder, the Scheme involves an eight month paid work placement in which each participant is placed in the office of an MP. From Monday to Thursday participants work for MPs and on Fridays receive training from a host of organisations, ranging from the House of Commons and the Civil Service to the sponsoring organisations, which include Prudential, Clifford Chance and Morrisons.

Participants each have a 'buddy' from a different MP's office to advise and support them in working in parliament and regularly meet with the SMF coordinator of the Scheme to ensure they feel well-supported.

At the conclusion of the first year – July 2012 – we will publish an evaluation, which will include what the participants gained from the Programme and their suggestions of what parliament needs to do to be more accessible to people from similar backgrounds to participants.

Whitehall Social Mobility Internship Programme

In May 2011, the SMF won a Government contract to deliver the pilot Whitehall Internship Social Mobility Programme as part of the Government's Social Mobility Strategy (*Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers*).

The Programme involved the SMF coordinating a two-week residential for 60 high-achieving year 12 students from low-income backgrounds across England. The students each undertook an internship in a government department in Whitehall, including the Treasury, Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Home Office. Students stayed in University of London accommodation and took part in a range of developmental and social activities in the evenings, including an e-commerce game with Accenture, interview skills session with Clifford Chance and a trip to a West End show.



After the Whitehall Internship Programme, 96% of students stated that they felt more confident, 90% felt more independent and 100% gained a better understanding of the Civil Service*



Above: Whitehall Programme participants at the Treasury



Make a Difference Day at Barclays

As part of Barclays' annual commitment to CSV Make a Difference Day, the Chairman of Barclays, Marcus Agius, spent a morning having a lively discussion with a group of APP participants about the proposed reforms of the Independent Commission on Banking. The group was split into two and each group asked to highlight the key implications of the reforms and to persuade Marcus whether or not to endorse the proposals. Participants also got to quiz Marcus on his career and current role – a unique experience to hear from one of the most influential figures in financial services.

Women in Business at Downing Street

15 female APP participants were invited by the Prime Minister to attend a reception at 10 Downing Street in celebration of women's contribution to business. During the event, the young people had the chance to talk to the Prime Minister and influential females in business; they also heard from Helena Morrissey, founder of the 30% Club, who spoke about the progress so far made towards the organisation's aim to have 30% female representation on UK corporate boards by 2015.

Bomi, who attended the evening, said that "It was a great night and having the chance to walk through the door of 10 Downing Street was an incredible experience!"

Fundraising Dinner

On the 10th October 2011, the Financial Services Lawyers Association held its inaugural charity dinner in aid of the Social Mobility Foundation. Kindly hosted by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, with food provided by the nearby Michel Roux Jr restaurant, 90 senior individuals from law and financial services came together in support of the SMF, with a keynote speech given by the Deputy Prime Minister, Rt Hon Nick Clegg MP.

The Deputy Prime Minister's message – calling on the profession to do more to improve social mobility – was well-received by the audience, whilst the SMF student who spoke at the end of the evening powerfully underlined why the support they had received was so important.

We were very grateful to the FSLA for hosting the dinner, which raised £17,000 for the SMF and has led to further interest in its work from the legal and financial sectors.

Above and below: Students discussing bank reforms with the Chairman of Barclays



Above: APP participants with the Prime Minister David Cameron at No 10 Downing Street



Above: Rt Hon Nick Clegg MP speaking at the FSLA dinner in aid of the SMF

Student profiles

Young people are supported by the SMF throughout their sixth form and university education. Support includes helping students to prepare for university – by giving them guidance on finance and introducing them to other SMF students at their chosen university – and providing them with opportunities to undertake internships and skill sessions whilst at university to help them make competitive applications for graduate jobs.



Current APP Student: Mizan has attended several skills sessions such as a workshop on management consultancy and the Accenture interview skills session as well as Oxbridge university visits. In the summer of 2011, Mizan undertook an internship with M&G Investments.

"The SMF has given me amazing opportunities that have developed me as a person and enhanced my chances of going to a really good university. The high calibre of internship I received from the SMF is something I could only have dreamt about getting myself. Through SMF events, I received a broad and unique perspective on the types of professions I could go into, delivered by professionals at the pinnacle of their sector."



2010 APP Student: Myrice joined the APP in 2010 and Scottish & Southern Energy provided her with both a mentor and an internship. Myrice began her degree in Chemical Engineering at the University of Cambridge in October 2011.

"I found SMF's sessions very useful; from the presentations regarding the application process to university, to the advice on how to write your personal statement. During my internship with Scottish and Southern Energy, I was able to have one-on-one sessions with different SSE staff, allowing me to gain a better understanding of the different roles the company has. Having experienced the many benefits, I would definitely recommend it to other students."



Undergraduate: Akeem undertook two internships: one in 2008 at Clifford Chance and one in 2010 at Apax Partners. Akeem is currently in his final year at the University of Liverpool and has been offered a graduate role by Ernst & Young, to start in 2012.

"The SMF has given me several opportunities to fulfil my potential, beginning with the UCAS advice which ensured I submitted the best possible university application. My internships introduced me to the corporate world and helped me develop important skills – such as networking – that are required for success in any area. Continuing my involvement with the SMF as a member of the Student Advisory Board gives me the chance to improve the charity and to increase opportunities for future students!"



Graduate: Georgina was placed on an internship by the SMF at Taylor Wessing in 2006; she went on to complete a degree in Law with Australian Law at the University of Nottingham. She is currently studying for her Legal Practice Course at BPP Law School after which she will begin a training contract with her former internship provider and city law firm, Taylor Wessing.

"My internship in 2006 was vital in helping me obtain a training contract at my former internship provider, Taylor Wessing. Without the help of the SMF, I would not have had any relevant experience to help illustrate how well I understood the profession or have any real understanding of the role of a commercial lawyer."

Public profile

The SMF is delighted that its work received wide coverage in 2011.

In February, a number of students the SMF has supported were featured in a BBC2 documentary, 'Who gets the best jobs?', which was watched by over 1.2 million people.

In April 2011, the SMF was mentioned in the Government's Social Mobility Strategy, *Opening Doors Breaking Barriers*, which led to interviews with SMF staff across a range of media outlets.

SMF students were featured in the BBC Radio 4 series, 'The Class Ceiling', and one student, Inez, wrote a two page feature for the Observer whilst on her internship with the newspaper.

There have been a number of other references to the work of the SMF during the course of the year including in profession-specific publications and in the course of a number of debates in parliament, including Prime Minister's Questions.

SMF Trustees



Lis Astall was formerly Managing Director of Accenture UK plc



Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP is the Labour Member of Parliament for Salford and Eccles and former Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government



Peter Bournell MBE is the former Aimhigher Coordinator for Brent and a former headteacher



Tom Cassels is a solicitor and a partner at Baker & McKenzie



Rt Hon Stephen Dorrell MP is the Conservative Member of Parliament for Charnwood and the elected Chairman of the Health Select Committee



Rt Hon Simon Hughes MP is the Member of Parliament for Southwark & Bermondsey and the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrats



Sir Terry Leahy was formerly Chief Executive of Tesco plc



Dr Geoff Parks is the Director of Undergraduate Admissions at the University of Cambridge



Trevor Phillips OBE is Chairman of the Equality and Human Rights Commission



Polly Toynbee is a journalist and writer who is currently a columnist for the Guardian newspaper

Working with us

Everything we do requires the support of enthusiastic individuals and employers, who provide us with:

- Mentors
- Venues and speakers for events
- Internships
- Financial support

If your organisation is interested in working with the SMF, we would be delighted to hear from you. We have ambitious plans to improve social mobility in the UK and with your help, we believe they can be achieved.



88%
of employers stated that working with the SMF allows their organisation to reach students who they do not normally reach through their usual recruitment channels*

We are currently supported by well over 200 organisations, including:





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