Queen Mary
University of London

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024–2026







Introduction

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a global call to action and a shared blueprint to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity for all. While the goals are global in ambition, their achievement depends on institutions, communities and individuals working together to create positive change.

At Queen Mary University of London, we recognise the important role we play in making the SDGs a reality, from our home in east London to communities across the world. Our commitment to driving progress towards a sustainable future is grounded in our values of inclusivity, integrity and global engagement, and embedded within our Strategy 2030 vision to be the most inclusive university of our kind anywhere.

The last two academic years have marked an important step forward in our sustainability journey. We launched our Sustainability Action Statement, setting clear priorities for 2025/26 to 2027/28, and became a signatory to the Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice, strengthening our commitment to embedding sustainability across research, education, partnerships and operations.

As a research-intensive university, Queen Mary is at the forefront of tackling some of the world's most pressing challenges. Our researchers are advancing knowledge and driving innovation across fields including climate action, public health, sustainable cities, clean energy and social justice, ensuring that research excellence translates into tangible benefits for society.

Through educational excellence, we equip students with the knowledge, skills and experience needed to become active global citizens and future leaders, including through new programmes such as the MSc in Natural Capital and Sustainability and MSc in Global Business and Sustainability.

As a civic university, we work in partnership with communities, policymakers, businesses, charities and cultural organisations to ensure that knowledge creates meaningful impact. This commitment to social justice and opportunity was reflected in our ranking as the top Russell Group university for social mobility in a new report from the Social Mobility Commission and our position of 66th globally for SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings. We were also the first institution to receive a Platinum Engage Watermark in 2021.

By remaining true to our 240-year history of championing inclusion, social mobility and public engagement, Queen Mary is uniquely placed to ensure that sustainable development is pursued in ways that are equitable, collaborative and community-centred. This report showcases the achievements, partnerships and impacts that are helping to realise that ambition and lays the foundations for the work still to come.

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Foreword



I am delighted to introduce Queen Mary University of London's first Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Report. Showcasing the work of our staff, students and partners across the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years, it highlights the many ways in which we are contributing to a more sustainable, equitable and prosperous future.

Our commitment to the SDGs is closely aligned with Strategy 2030 and our ambition to be the most inclusive, research-intensive University of our kind anywhere. Through excellence in research and education and deep engagement with our local and global communities, we are helping tackle some of society's most pressing challenges, from climate change and health inequalities to access to justice and opportunity.

Central to this ambition is our commitment to creating a truly inclusive environment, so that all our students and staff can flourish, reach their full potential and be proud to be part of Queen Mary University of London. The SDGs provide a valuable framework for measuring and strengthening this impact, while our Sustainability Action Statement, launched in June 2025, reinforces our determination to embed sustainability across all aspects of university life.

I am encouraged by the progress we've made so far; as 2030 approaches, the global sustainability landscape will continue to evolve, as will Queen Mary. The goals themselves may change, but our commitment to generating positive social impact through excellence in research and education, along with our continued civic engagement will remain constant. I'd like to thank all of those who have contributed to this progress and look forward to the journey ahead.

Professor Colin Bailey
President and Principal

1

No Poverty

End poverty in all its forms everywhere.



Queen Mary University London and Newham College colleagues and young people come together to discuss Inclusive Growth on East London's High Streets
Rehan Jamil © Queen Mary University of London

Engagement

In 2025/26, Queen Mary launched the Inclusive Growth Grants programme to support community-led projects addressing barriers to economic opportunity across east London. The funded projects will have brought together University teams, local organisations and residents to explore challenges relating to employability, entrepreneurship, health, skills, and economic participation.

Working with young people, disabled learners, women entrepreneurs, and community groups, the projects aim to co-design inclusive approaches that widen access to opportunity and strengthen local resilience. As they progress, they will surface new insights into how universities and communities can work together to support more inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Operations and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Queen Mary is a Russell Group university with a difference. Embedded in our Strategy 2030, we combine excellence in research with an unparalleled commitment to social justice, social mobility, and a very close relationship with our local communities. Combined, this has led us to be the first university to receive the Platinum award for Public Engagement.

Our 2024-2025 Access and Participation Plan (APP) Reports show that 35 per cent of our students are from households where the annual income is less than £35k, 91 per cent are from state schools and 21 per cent are eligible for free school meals. Scholarships, funding and grants are available to support students' struggling financially, including our Financial Assistance Fund (FAF) and Queen Mary Bursary, which have supported over 4,500 students across the 2025/26 academic year.



Artwork from the East London Civic Action Network: Building Health Equity across east London
Jon Cole © Queen Mary University of London



A student graduates from the Flying Start Programme, Summer 2026

Research

Ending poverty in all its forms everywhere remains one of the world's greatest challenges and an essential prerequisite for sustainable development[1]. Through impactful research, at every scale, Queen Mary is driving progress to address these challenges. Our Centre for Globalisation Research and Research Circle for the Study of Inequality and Poverty (RCSIP) conducts internationally recognised research on poverty, inequality and development economics, hosting an annual workshop series since 2014.

Shaping global policy, this research on public works and urban poverty has informed the World Bank, DFID and UK Government reports. Closer to home, our research on housing distress in Tower Hamlets, one of England's most deprived boroughs, explores links between poor housing and health, while the Mile End Institute studies social mobility across east London.

Education

Education is a tool of empowerment, offering a mechanism to break the poverty cycle. Ranked first in the country for social mobility by the Sutton Trust in 2021, we are the most successful Russell Group university at recruiting students from backgrounds usually under-represented in higher education. Of our domestic undergraduate students, 35 per cent are from households where the total family income is less than £35k per year, automatically qualifying them for the Queen Mary Bursary, supporting access to education.

Going further, we must support our students to tackle these issues in the working word, acting as agents of change. We offer a range of courses across our schools, including Geography Business Management (BSc), Global Development (BA), and Earth and Climate Science (BSc), supporting students' understanding and facilitation of global development.

1 https://sdgs.un.org/topics/poverty-eradication

Case studies

Flying Start Programme

We believe that talent should never be limited by background and are committed to advancing social mobility by creating opportunities for students from all walks of life. The Flying Start programme, a strategic partnership with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), offers an exceptional blend of academic excellence, professional accreditation, and hands on accountancy experience.

Giving students a flying start towards becoming a Chartered Accountant with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, the programme has built a highly diverse talent pipeline. Across recent cohorts, 83 per cent of offer holders are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 30 per cent of applicants are from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Opportunity is extended beyond the University through outreach to 64 schools and colleges, inspiring young people from underrepresented communities to consider careers in accountancy.

In 2024, PwC awarded £700,000 in bursaries to 70 students from households with annual incomes below £35,000, helping remove financial barriers and enabling students to focus on their studies and future careers. The programme, which transforms outcomes for these accounting students, has a 100 per cent continuation rate, with graduates going on to secure incredible roles across the world, transforming their life. Nationally, the programme has received multiple recognitions and awards, including PQ Magazine's Accountancy Training Programme of the Year 2025 award, Times Higher Education Award Finalist, QS Reimagine Education Awards Finalist, Royal Honour for Industry and Skills Contribution and a Graduate of the Year award for a Flying Start student. These accolades reflect the strength of our mission, the dedication of our team, and the transformative impact of our work on students' lives.

Healthy Home: Housing Health Hubs in Tower Hamlets

Our current research activity reinforces the Queen Mary Policy Hub briefing, which identifies housing insecurity as a key driver of health inequalities. It calls for stronger tenant protections, improved coordination between housing and health services, and culturally informed support.

In response to this, Dr Elizabeth Storer's research examines how the UK housing crisis intersects with migration and refugee experiences, focusing on Somali communities in Birmingham. Using ethnographic and participatory methods, her work shows how migrants are often confined to insecure, overcrowded and substandard housing, where poor conditions drive significant physical and mental health harms. It conceptualises these experiences as "housing distress", shaped by hostile environment policies and wider structural inequalities, producing forms of racialised abandonment.

Dr Storer's ongoing work develops community-led solutions, including training local "Housing Champions" and establishing Housing Hubs to provide advice, support, and pathways into services with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. These initiatives will feed residents' experiences directly into policy processes, translating lived experience into actionable evidence to drive systemic change.



2

Zero Hunger

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.



Food being served at the Curve, Queen Mary University London, Mile End campus

Engagement

The cost-of-living crisis is something that has continued to affect our students. In a recent pulse survey conducted by the Queen Mary Students' Union, 88 per cent said that buying food is an issue. Since August, our Students' Union has provided over 60 food vouchers to support students and continues to operate two food pantries, with our Mile End food pantry having been visited over 300 times since August 2025. The pantries are there to provide some cupboard essentials, supporting those experiencing food poverty.

Engagement also connects food security with culture and livelihoods. Queen Mary geographers co-produced the bilingual community cookbook Neidhal Kaimanam/Seasoned by the Sea with coastal communities in South India, using recipes to document relationships between food, fishing livelihoods, ecology and social justice. Released to community and public audiences in Chennai in 2025, the project brings local knowledge and fishing cultures into wider conversations about sustainable food systems and coastal livelihoods.

Operations

In January 2025 we achieved one star in The Sustainable Restaurant Association's Food Made Good standard, the world's leading sustainability certification for the hospitality sector. We were particularly commended for our commitment to serving diverse, inclusive, seasonal menus, reducing food waste, and following the University's ambitious environmental goals. Across campus, catering outlets offer plant-based meals every day, including discounts through Meat-Free Mondays, alongside lower-cost options such as soup and bread for £2.90 and smaller hot meals for £5. Students can also access pre-paid meal packages during Semester 2 and exam periods.

The Curve kitchen, on our Mile End Campus, incorporates seasonal ingredients, surplus produce from local supplier Angry Monk and small amounts of produce grown on our campus allotments. Since 2022, more than 28,000kg of surplus vegetables have been rescued through Angry Monk. Most of our outlets offer discounts through the Too Good To Go app, developed and launched by Queen Mary Alumni in 2016 and initially funded by our enterprise funding. Across the last three years, 2,241 meals have been saved across our Students' Union outlets alone, with 1,575 new customers benefitting; Environmentally, that equates to 1,961,010 litres of water saved and 6.5 tonnes CO_2e.

THE SUSTAINABLE RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION
FOOD MADE GOOD
2025



A student restocks the food pantry in the Queen Mary Students' Union

Research

Globally, one in twelve people experienced hunger in 2024, while 23.2% of children under the age of five were affected by stunted growth[2]. Our research spans the food system, from crop science to food access and child nutrition. A £0.5 million Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) grant helps improve crop yields through photosynthesis, with Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and agribusiness. The Centre on Labour, Sustainability and Global Production examines how food reaches people, studying farmers' markets and the solidarity economy to widen food access in cities. And in the Sanitation Hygiene Infant Nutrition Efficacy (SHINE) trial, Queen Mary researchers played a key role testing infant feeding and sanitation among 5,200 Zimbabwean infants to reduce stunting and anaemia.

The Centre on Labour, Sustainability and Global Production examines how food reaches people, studying farmers' markets and the solidarity economy to widen food access in cities. And in the SHINE trial, Queen Mary researchers played a key role testing infant feeding and sanitation among 5,200 Zimbabwean infants to reduce stunting and anaemia.

Education

Food systems are under increasing stress, requiring innovative solutions to sustain. Our courses, such as our Global Business and Sustainability MSc, part of the United Nation's-sponsored responsible management PRME, give students the opportunity and learn from industry leaders including Friends of the Earth, the Trade Justice Movement and the UN's Food and Agricultural Organisation.

In collaboration with Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, students on our Plant and Fungal Taxonomy, Diversity and Conservation MSc unpack plant and fungal taxonomy and diversity. Learning from leaders in the space our students equipped with the skills to conserve biodiversity, contributing to food security for years to come.

2 https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2025

Case studies

Food Improvement Goals in Schools (FIGS) I & II projects

The Food Improvement Goals in Schools (FIGS) team, led by Dr Meredith Hawking, uses ethnographic and participatory methods to explore the implementation and impact of Universal Free School Meals (UFSMs) in primary schools (FIGS I, ActEarly) and secondary schools (FIGS II, NIHR SPCR). Working with children, young people, parents, communities, academics and Tower Hamlets Council, the research builds evidence for policies that support every child and young person's right to nutritious food. Findings from FIGS I showed that UFSMs were widely valued by children, families and school staff, helping to reduce financial pressures on households, improve access to nutritious food and promote equity by ensuring all children could eat together regardless of family income.

Co-production sits at the heart of the programme. Tower Hamlets Youth Council members and local mothers helped shape research priorities, refine methods and validate findings, bringing lived experience to policy and academic audiences. More than 650 people have engaged with the research through engagement activities including New Scientist Live.

The programme has produced two peer-reviewed papers, a book chapter in *Urban Childhoods: Growing up in Inequality and Hope* and a policy brief, with findings shared through six national conference presentations and four invited briefings to Tower Hamlets Council, the Greater London Authority, Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) and the Nutrition Society. Building on this work, the research secured £155,815 in follow-on funding from Barts Charity and the NIHR North Thames ARC to investigate the cost-effectiveness of UFSMs and inform future policy development.

Supporting Food Security in a Changing Climate

Food insecurity and climate change are increasingly interconnected challenges across Africa, particularly in communities already facing social and economic marginalisation. Remitting for Resilience (R2) is a multi-country research partnership across 12 universities in 10 countries examining how migrant remittances can build gender-inclusive resilience to food insecurity and climate change in marginalised African environments. Queen Mary leads the UK-Zimbabwe research partnership, exploring how money sent home by Zimbabwean migrants can strengthen household resilience in the face of growing environmental and economic pressures.

The project is generating evidence from both ends of a major remittance corridor, including surveys with 300 members of the Zimbabwean diaspora in the UK and interviews with migrants, recipient communities and policymakers. By examining how remittances support food access, livelihoods and climate adaptation, the research is strengthening understanding of how financial transfers can reduce vulnerability and build resilience. Working with remittance providers, regulators and compliance bodies, the project is identifying barriers that increase transfer costs or restrict access. Findings will inform policy recommendations and community resources aimed at improving remittance systems and supporting climate adaptation. At a time of intensifying climate pressures in Zimbabwe, the research is helping ensure evidence informs decisions affecting both migrant and recipient communities.



3

Good Health and Wellbeing

Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages.



Children pose for a photo after taking part in the Ultimate Multisport Activity Camp, part of the Tower Hamlets Active Communities Initiative

Engagement

Across Queen Mary, we work with patients, communities and public partners to ensure health research, services and policy are shaped by lived experience. Black Health Legacy exemplifies this commitment. Aiming to become the UK's largest community-based health research programme for Black, Black African and Caribbean people, it combines trusted health and genetic research with extensive community engagement. To date, the programme has engaged more than 5,000 people across London and Manchester and recruited 1,700 participants, helping build the evidence needed to improve prevention, diagnosis and treatment for future generations.

Community perspectives are also informing healthcare improvement in innovative ways. Illuminations, a theatre production imagining better sickle cell care, was co-produced with people living with the condition and grounded in Queen Mary research. In 2026, it toured museums, hospitals and community venues across the UK, reaching more than 1,400 people through 22 performances.

This commitment to co-production is further advanced through SHAPE Health, Queen Mary's flagship platform for neighbourhood health, built on the principle that health is lived before it is measured. Bringing together residents, researchers, the NHS, local authorities and community organisations, it supports place-based approaches to tackling health inequalities, including a landmark 10-year partnership with Barking and Dagenham Council, established in 2025 and the first of its kind between a Russell Group university and a local authority. Together, these initiatives are helping ensure that health research and services are shaped with communities, not simply for them.

Operations and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Supporting the health and wellbeing of our students and staff is central to creating an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive. Queen Mary's student wellbeing services bring together the Advice and Counselling Service, Disability and Dyslexia Service, and Student Life team, providing support across mental health, disability, welfare and wellbeing. Since the start of the 2025/26 academic year, more than 3,800 students have accessed support, while our Sexual Assault and Harassment Advisers have supported over 80 students. Students can also access a 24/7 wellbeing helpline from anywhere in the world.

Alongside specialist support for students, staff can access a comprehensive wellbeing service, including a confidential Employee Assistance Programme. Opportunities to develop positive wellbeing practices are available across the University community, including mindfulness training delivered through St Benet's Chaplaincy.

We also promote healthier lifestyles through our campus environment. Queen Mary operates as a smoke-free campus and runs a smoking cessation service in partnership with the NHS, supported by our Health and Lifestyle Research Unit. Active travel is encouraged through cycle storage and infrastructure across our campuses, while our sports facilities and QMSU outreach programmes help increase participation in physical activity among students, staff and local communities.

Research

Health inequalities remain a major challenge in England, where life expectancy differs by around 10 years between the most and least deprived communities[3]. Queen Mary addresses this gap across prevention, treatment and community-led research. The Wolfson Institute for Population Health's salt and obesity unit cut salt intake from 9.38g to 7.58g a day, reducing stroke and heart disease deaths.

Uniting 350 researchers across prevention, screening and treatment, we administer several programmes from Cancer Research UK (CRUK) and multiple projects and fellowships, including our Barts Cancer Centre, an official CRUK Centre.

Patients are embedded throughout our work; East London Genes & Health, one of the world's largest genomics studies, is recruiting 100,000 British Bangladeshi and Pakistani volunteers; NIHR Barts BRC gives patients a governance role, including a patient co-chair; and Tower Hamlets' Health Determinants Research Collaboration, run with the council, won a 2024 London Higher Award, while the Partnership for Black People's Health is co-produced with 200+ community members. Together, these initiatives are helping ensure that research reflects the needs and experiences of the communities it serves.

Education

Top 100 in the world for medicine and dentistry, our Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry is committed to addressing health inequalities through impactful research and education.

Our medical and dental education relationship with the Barts NHS trust gives our students a unique perspective on healthcare for all, alongside receiving world-class teaching from leading academics in the space.

We offer pioneering, interdisciplinary courses, including MSc Global Public Health, MSc Health Data in Practice, specialised degrees in Sports and Exercise Medicine, and a PGcert addressing Tuberculosis, a global health priority. We also offer an MBBS, giving students studying this exposure to the wide range of illnesses and traumas suffered by the very diverse communities of east London.



Children take part in an interactive, educational workshop "Skin Deep" at the Centre of the Cell at Queen Mary University's Whitechapel Campus, discovering the world of human skin

3 https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthinequalities/bulletins/healthylifeexpectancybynationalareadeprivationenglandandwales/between2013to2015and2022to2024

Case studies

Centre of the Cell

Centre of the Cell is the first informal science education centre to be located within working biomedical research laboratories. It has engaged with over 290,000 visitors since 2009, with its unique digital interactive STEM Pod experience and sixteen curriculum-linked science workshops delivered to over 20,000 young people annually. The Centre's science ambassadors are world leading academics, postgraduates, medical and dental students, who share their insight and passion for science to stimulate interest and dialogue, help improve awareness of health and wellbeing and raise aspirations. Opportunities for mentoring, volunteering, advice on university applications and summer science school places are available for over 1,200 young people in Centre of the Cell's Youth Scheme.

The Centre's educational initiatives target critical UN SDG 3 priorities, successfully converting scientific dialogue into measurable societal impact:

- Environmental Health (Target 3.9): Educating 5,000 youth on air pollution provided vital research data, directly informing key policy changes in clean air legislation.
- Non-Communicable Diseases (Target 3.4): Tailored workshops, public lectures, and digital content tackle modern health crises, including ultra-processed foods, nitrous oxide abuse, diabetes, liver disease, and cancer.
- Maternal and Child Health (Targets 3.1 & 3.2): Proactive community outreach directly addresses local vaccine hesitancy. Ambassadors are engaged at regional events to answer vital maternal and infant health questions where it matters most today.

By demystifying medical science within vulnerable communities, Centre of the Cell transforms how public health is understood, communicated, and delivered.

Tower Hamlets Active Communities: Tackling Health Inequalities Through Sport

Physical inactivity remains a major challenge in Tower Hamlets, which has some of the highest rates of childhood obesity in the UK. Through its Tower Hamlets Active Communities initiative, QMSU Sport works with schools and local partners to make sport and physical activity more accessible for children and young people, while creating development opportunities for Queen Mary students.

A flagship example is the annual Summer Sports Camp at Queen Mary's QMotion Sport and Fitness Centre. In 2025, 45 children aged 8-11 took part in two weeks of multi-sport activities. Most participants were from Tower Hamlets, with 73 per cent coming from areas of higher deprivation. The programme combines physical activity with healthy lifestyle education and tailored support, with more than 80 per cent of participants reporting improved physical activity levels and 75 per cent reporting better mental health and social skills. Eighty-three per cent expressed an interest in continuing sport after the programme.

The programme also creates opportunities for Queen Mary students. Four paid student coaches delivered the camp, while year-round outreach activities generated more than 200 hours of student volunteering across local schools and community settings. Together, these initiatives demonstrate how sport can improve health, reduce inequalities and strengthen community wellbeing.



4

Quality Education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.



Students graduate from Queen Mary University of London

Engagement

At Queen Mary, educational excellence extends beyond the classroom. Through engaged learning, students work with communities, public bodies and external partners to apply their knowledge to real-world challenges while developing the skills, confidence and experience needed for future careers.

This approach is embedded across disciplines. Through our Civil Society internship module, 20 undergraduate Politics students each year spend two days a week, for a semester, with London Citizens, a Queen Mary partner for more than 25 years supporting community organising campaigns. This has recently included the 2026 election campaigns, issues of housing and homelessness, and work and wages.

Students on our interdisciplinary MSc in Global Public Health and Policy work with Newham's Centre for Health and Care Equity on dissertation projects addressing local health inequalities, including developing a tool for assessing health literacy. Meanwhile, our first-year students in Geography contribute research, mapping and visualisation expertise to the East London Atlas, a public resource supporting a healthy and sustainable future for east London.

We also extend educational opportunity beyond the University. In 2024/25, the Queen Mary Futures programme engaged over 700 Year 12 students, helping them explore higher education and build the confidence and skills needed to progress to university. Together, these initiatives show how Queen Mary delivers quality education that extends beyond the classroom, empowering learners to make to make positive impacts on people and places in London and beyond.

Operations and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Refreshed in 2025, our Access and Participation Plan is central to ensuring all students have access to quality education and can succeed within it. Underpinning this is the support we offer, financial or otherwise. We offer a range of bursaries and scholarships to support students and widen participation in higher education, removing financial barriers, including the Queen Mary University of London Bursary, which has supported over 4,300 students in the 24/25 academic year alone. These funds prioritise students from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds, ensuring that financial circumstances do not limit educational opportunity.

Our contextual admissions policy, restructured for 2025 entry, is another important part of our widening participation approach. It aims to mitigate both educational disadvantage and individual circumstances, ensuring that anyone who can flourish at Queen Mary can join us, irrespective of background.



Students pose for a photo in the foyer of London City Institute of Technology (LCIoT)



Colleagues come together in discussion at the Queen Mary University of London Festival of Education 2026

Research

As education systems face rapid technological and societal change, high-quality teaching increasingly depends on evidence-informed innovation and professional learning[4]. The Queen Mary Academy, which leads pedagogic research and scholarship, supports educators to test approaches including immersive learning, engagement analytics and team-based learning.

The Centre for Excellence in Artificial Intelligence in Education embeds AI literacy into teaching, preparing students and staff for the workforce.

Through fellowships, funding and a Festival of Education, Queen Mary shares educators' scholarship, building an evidence base for teaching practice. This extends to researcher development through the Postdoc Congress, supporting postdoctoral researchers through professional development, networking and shared learning.

From classroom to research culture, Queen Mary is building evidence-based teaching and learning.

Education

Queen Mary delivers quality education by combining inclusive access, educational innovation, student partnership and future-focused skills development. With 46 per cent of our students being first in their family to attend university, our vision is to open the doors of opportunity and be the most inclusive university of our kind.

Our educational excellence is driven through collaboration between staff and students. The nationally recognised Queen Mary Peer-Led Team Learning programme received a Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence in 2025, while initiatives such as the Learner Interns Programme enable students to work alongside staff as co-researchers and co-creators; In 204/25 interns co-created research project engaging over 115 students. Learning beyond the curriculum is also recognised through the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR).

We also support the development of technical and vocational skills through the London City Institute of Technology, creating pathways into higher technical education, apprenticeships and high-skilled employment in engineering, digital technologies and construction.

4 https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/unlocking-high-quality-teaching_f5b82176-en.html

Case studies

SustainAbility Shortcourse

In 2025, Queen Mary launched Foundations in SustainAbility, a University-wide short course designed to build sustainability literacy and green skills among students and staff. Developed through the Sustainability Transformation through Research, Education and Action (STREAM) initiative, the course was co-created by five students alongside over 15 academic and professional services colleagues, using the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a framework. The award-winning course takes approximately 10 hours to complete and introduces learners to the sustainability challenges and opportunities shaping society and the workplace.

Having embedded the course within the Flying Start accountancy programme, we are the first of PwC's Flying Start partners to introduce this. It has since been integrated into the Law, Sustainability and Ethics module, helping equip future professionals with the knowledge, skills and confidence to respond to sustainability and ESG challenges in their careers. Students are already sharing how the course has helped them realise the role they're able to play in driving sustainable change.

> I used to think sustainability belonged to scientists and activists. But in reality, it also lives in spreadsheets, reports, and balance sheets... That's what excites me now: using Foundations in Sustainability study material, data, transparency, and financial systems to drive genuine environmental change."
>
> **First-year Flying Start student**

Festival of Education

The Queen Mary Festival of Education is the University's flagship annual celebration of educational excellence, bringing together staff and students to share innovative teaching practice, educational research and inclusive approaches to learning. Through workshops, presentations and interactive sessions over two days (in March and June), the festival promotes collaboration, professional development and evidence-informed teaching.

Across 2024/25 and 2025/26, it engaged more than 650 participants and featured contributions from all faculties. Posters explored themes including authenticity and integrity, making learning visible in the age of AI, humanising STEM education and assessment choice for inclusive learning. By sharing and scaling best practice, the festival helps enhance teaching quality, the student learning experience and promote education co-creation across the University.



5

Gender Equality

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.



Local school children visiting the Moon Palace on the Mile End campus – a travelling artwork and observatory, formerly a school bus, transformed into a mobile space for creativity and astronomy

Engagement

Advancing gender equality requires ongoing dialogue, visibility and action. Across Queen Mary, engagement activities create opportunities to celebrate women's achievements, challenge inequality and support a more inclusive community. Every March we celebrate Women's History Month, incorporating International Women's Day (IWD). In 2026, 14 events brought together staff, students and the local community, attracting more than 500 attendees. This was also the first year our Students' Union delivered a dedicated programme for IWD.

Operations and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Our mission to create a truly inclusive environment is embedded throughout the culture of Queen Mary and we are proud to hold an Institutional Silver Athena Swan award. Across our Schools and Institutes we hold one gold, four silver and six bronze awards. Our most recent award was achieved in November 2025 by the School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Sciences.

Through our engagement with Athena Swan, we have developed a five-year Gender Impact Plan (GIP) from 2022 to 2027, for advancing gender equality. Reflected in our January 2025 progress update, 67 per cent of the Plan's actions have been achieved or are set to be achieved on schedule, including in priority areas of student representation and experience and continued high success rates for academic promotion for women.

Underpinning this, our Equality, Diversity and Inclusions Governance supports the embedding of EDI throughout all levels at Queen Mary. Development programmes specifically for women, such as Aurora and Springboard, facilitate an environment where female staff can flourish and reach their full potential.

Our staff networks help drive progress throughout the year. Launched in 2024/25, the Menopause Staff Network has more than 100 members, while the Gender Equality Staff Network has over 150 members and is open to all staff interested in advancing gender equality. Through workshops, webinars and peer support, the networks raise awareness of issues including the gender pension gap, shared parental leave and women's experiences in the workplace.

Together, these initiatives help foster a culture where gender equality is actively discussed, supported and advanced.



Staff come together for the ITS EmpowerHER Day 2026; a day of workshops, talks and networking focused on career development, leadership and inclusion within technology and digital environments

Research

Gender inequality remains deeply embedded worldwide, with nearly one in three women has experienced violence, while women hold fewer than one-third of managerial positions globally[5].

Queen Mary addresses this through research spanning data science, the arts, economics and healthcare. Data Against Feminicide, from Queen Mary Business School, uses AI to help civil society groups monitor gender-related violence in 65 organisations across 16 countries, winning a 2025 Science, Technology & the ARTS (S+T+ARTS) honour.

Women, Theatre, Justice, with Clean Break, examines how gender shapes leadership and voice in criminal justice. In the Centre for Brain and Behaviour, BBC-highlighted research examines how hormonal fluctuations affect women with ADHD, an overlooked area of women's health.

In the School of Economics and Finance, research on confidence and college choice closed the French elite admissions gender gap by 72%, shaping a 2024 national education reform. From data activism to national policy, this research closes gender gaps in justice, health and education.



A chemical structure photo taken in the School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences

Education

Advancing gender equality through education requires both inclusive learning environments and targeted action to address persistent barriers. At Queen Mary, gender equality is embedded within our Inclusive Curriculum and Educational Practice guidance and Access and Participation Plan, reflecting our commitment to reducing attainment gaps and ensuring all students can succeed.

We also work to increase participation in disciplines where women remain underrepresented. Through initiatives such as the Women in STEM Scholarships and Girls into Physics Summer School, we provide opportunities for women and girls to develop confidence, knowledge and aspirations in STEM subjects. Since its launch in 2021, the Girls into Physics Summer School has engaged more than 200 participants from over 20 schools across London.

Beyond STEM, our annual Rise Up event introduces female-identifying students in Years 10-12 to careers in business and finance, helping to inspire the next generation of leaders. Together, these initiatives support more equitable access to education and careers, helping women and girls realise their potential across a range of sectors.

5 https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2026/goal-05/

Case studies

Sick of It: Advancing Gender Equality in Women's Health

Professor Sophie Harman's research examines how global political and economic systems continue to shape, and often undermine, women's health outcomes. In her book *Sick of It: The Global Fight for Women's Health*, Harman exposes how women are routinely overlooked as patients, healthcare workers and caregivers, despite women's health being central to social and economic development. Combining academic research with lived experience, the book challenges longstanding assumptions and identifies practical opportunities for reform.

The research has influenced policy and practice internationally. *Sick of It* was selected as a background resource for the UN Expert Group Meeting on SDG 5 in preparation for the 2025 High-Level Political Forum, on which Professor Harman served as an expert member. Its findings have also informed discussions with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Médecins Sans Frontières, the International Planned Parenthood Federation and parliamentary groups focused on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The book was named *The Observer* Book of the Week, featured on Woman's Hour and Times Radio, and shortlisted for both the 2025 the British Academy Book Prize and BISA Susan Strange Best Book Prize, helping bring women's health inequalities into mainstream public and policy debate.

Persistent Gender Imbalances in UK Political Candidate Selections

Gender imbalances are felt at all levels and in all sectors, causing a trickle-down effect that entrenches them further. Published in 2024, a comprehensive analysis by Dr Sofia Collignon, Senior Lecturer in Comparative Politics at Queen Mary, shows that the screening process for the selection of parliamentary candidates is persistently gender imbalanced.

Of 134 parliamentary selections by the Conservatives, a striking 70 per cent are men. In contrast, Labour's selection shows a more balanced approach, with 56 per cent of their 206 candidates being men. Many reasons have been cited for this imbalance among the Tories, such as lack of supply of female candidates and local candidate preferences. However, Dr. Collignon's paper argues that these explanations shift the blame onto individual women rather than addressing the structural barriers within the Conservative Party.

Dr Collignon's paper is a clarion call for the Conservative Party to undertake meaningful reforms if it hopes to rectify the under-representation of women among its MPs.



6

Clean Water and Sanitation

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.



At one of our biggest ever Big Green Canal cleans, students come together to clean the Regents Canal next to Queen Mary's Mile End campus

Engagement

After adopting the stretch of canal running alongside our campus, Queen Mary Students' Union hosts annual canal clean-ups, in partnership with the Canal River Trust.

In 2024 we began our "Big Green Canal Cleans", aimed at bringing together students and staff alike to clean up our local water way and park. Our biggest ever "Big Green Canal Cleans", a key event in Climate Action Week in February 2025, saw 50 students and staff join forces to clean the canal across two hours, delivering over 100 hours of dedicated canal-cleaning volunteering and creating a cleaner, more welcoming public space.

Operations

It's vital to ensure that students, staff and visitors have access to free drinking water, which they can access through over 20 water coolers across campus and water dispensers in all kitchens. Leak detection systems are also incorporated into new building projects, reducing unnecessary water wastage. Our Sustainability Action Statement commits us to improve infrastructure, monitoring and awareness of water supply use to deliver an overall reduction and improve efficiency, with goals and progress reviewed annually.

Across campus, conscious planting within our green spaces has reduced the amount of water we use for irrigation. We have increased the number of herbaceous perennials over the last two years, and, by replacing the volume of bedding plants we acquire each year, our watering requirements have dropped.

Research

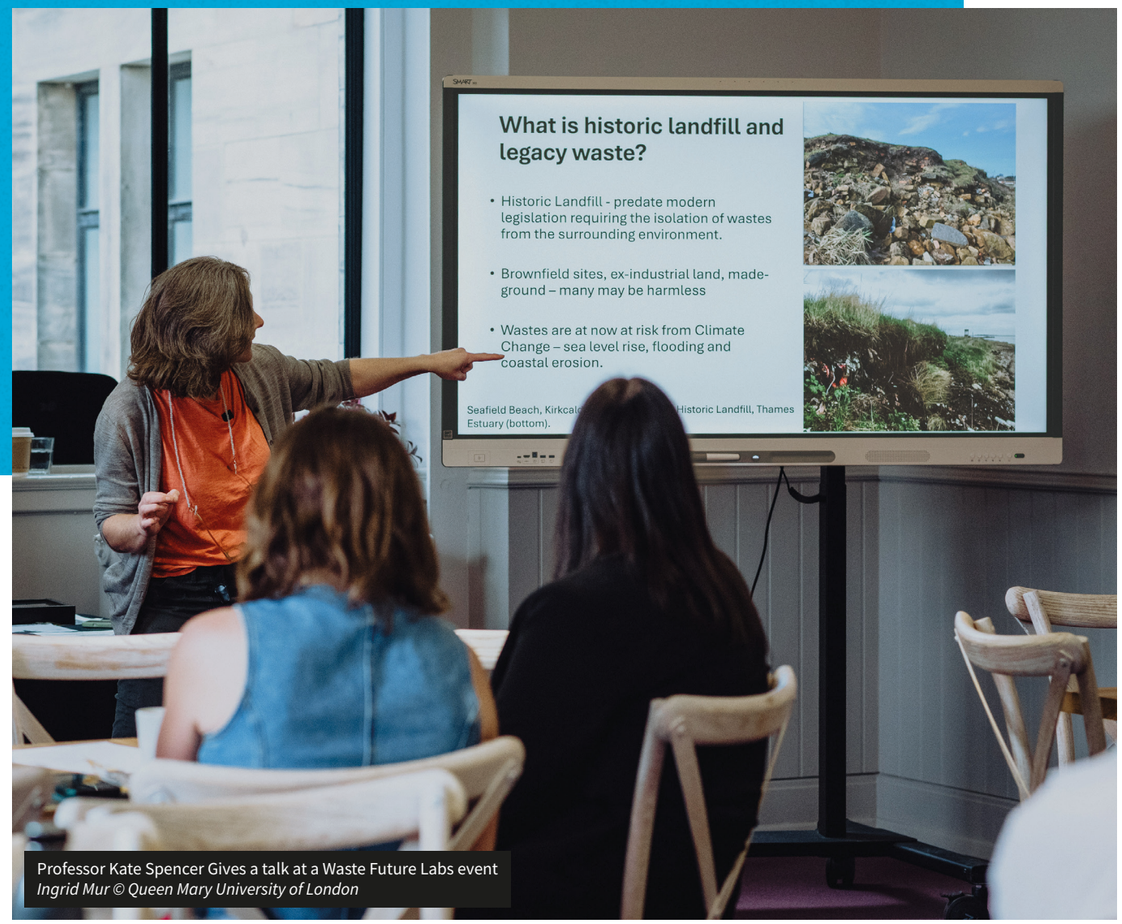
Globally, one in four people still lack access to safe drinking water, a basic human right[6]. Researchers in our School of Society and Environment are investigating water scarcity in the Himalayas, while studies on rewilding are improving understanding of how nature-based solutions can help mitigate floods and droughts.

Our dedicated Centre for Sustainable Engineering is advancing water purification technologies and contaminant removal processes, supported by specialist facilities for testing sustainable drinking water treatment solutions to deliver safe drinking water at scale. Beyond Earth, Queen Mary scientists were part of the 2nd runner-up team in the Aqualunar Challenge, developing innovative methods to purify water buried beneath the moon's surface.



An eroding landfill at one of Queen Mary's research sites in Tillbury
Claire Harris © Queen Mary University of London

6 https://data.unicef.org/resources/jmp-report-2025/



Professor Kate Spencer Gives a talk at a Waste Future Labs event
Ingrid Mur © Queen Mary University of London

Education

Delivering educational excellence means remaining at the cutting-edge of industry progress. In 2024, Queen Mary strengthened its partnership with Amsterdam water provider Waternet through the installation of advanced drinking water purification equipment at the School of Engineering and Materials Science. Designed to help tackle emerging contaminants such as PFAS (or “forever chemicals”), the new facilities bring industry-leading technology directly into the learning environment, supporting teaching excellence across our programmes.

Within our module GEG6153, Urban Water In and Beyond the Pipes, available across undergraduate degree paths such as our BSc Geography, students explore the political, social, and infrastructural geographies of water within city environments. Access to leading facilities and teaching ensures our students have the knowledge and practical skills needed to deliver sustainable water solutions in the future.

Case studies

What’s in the water? Tackling plastic pollution

Plastic pollution is a global problem. Every year 19 to 23m million tonnes of plastic waste leak into aquatic ecosystems, polluting lakes, rivers and seas. These plastics are believed to have a detrimental environmental effect. To help address the issue, Researchers at Queen Mary have led an international project, with 18 partners across France and England.

The project developed a catchment-based approach tackling plastic pollution that has since been adopted by The Catchment Based Approach (CaBA), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs’ vehicle for improving the condition of UK rivers.

Researchers also developed a citizen science approach to measure the amount of plastic pollution in and around rivers. The resulting online tool has produced the UK’s largest dataset river plastic pollution and is now being used by the Oslo and Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR) to inform new monitoring methods.

Historic Coastal Landfills

Research at Queen Mary University of London, by Professor Kate Spencer, has shown how rising floodwaters increase the risk of toxic contaminants being released from historic coastal landfills (CHLs). The research highlights the vulnerability of aquatic ecosystems and communities to hazardous pollutants being released from CHLs into marine environments. It was revealed that 30 per cent of England’s protected coastlines and bathing water catchments are at risk from CHL pollution, posing both environmental and public health risks. More than 1,200 sites face potential tidal flooding, with 10 per cent at risk of erosion by 2050.

A £2.9 million UKRI/DEFRA grant has been awarded to enhance resilience in coastal communities facing landfill pollution through the ResAnth project. These outcomes ensure communities will be better prepared for the environmental and public health risks posed by CHLs.



Students dispose of waste collected from the Big Green Canal Clean

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7

Affordable and Clean Energy

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.



Engagement

We are part of our local Tower Hamlets Climate Partnership, a strategic group to deliver the Borough's Net Zero ambitions and supporting a fair and just transition. On campus, energy saving tips and myth busting advice s available on our webpages to staff and students. Every Christmas period Queen Mary implements our winter shut-down procedure, with annual training delivered to our Residential Life Officers to encourage energy-saving behaviours.

As part of Climate Action Week, Queen Mary's Sustainability Team worked with student volunteers to promote energy efficiency through an out-of-hours energy switch-off campaign in the Laws Building. The initiative facilitated switching off of non-essential equipment, including lighting, portable heaters, projectors and local air-conditioning units ahead of the weekend.

The campaign demonstrated the impact that simple behaviour changes can have on energy use. Electricity consumption during the switch-off weekend fell to approximately 820 kWh, compared with 1,422 kWh and 2,099 kWh over the two preceding weekends, equating to potential savings of up to 1,279 kWh and over £300 in a single weekend. The exercise was accompanied by practical guidance on using local heating and cooling controls and reducing unnecessary energy use, helping embed longer-term energy-saving behaviours across the University community.

Operations

Achieving our commitment to carbon net zero by 2050 requires continuous improvement across our estate. We are reducing the University's operational carbon footprint through a combination of low-carbon heating, energy-efficiency improvements and investment in smarter building infrastructure.

A major milestone was reached in September 2024 with the commissioning of a new heat recovery system that captures waste heat from a data centre and feeds it into the district heating network. At full capacity, the system is expected to generate approximately 3.4GWh of low-carbon heat each year, avoiding around 553 tonnes of Scope 1 (natural gas) CO_2e emissions annually.

Alongside this, energy-efficiency upgrades, completed in 2024, at the Graduate Centre and Q Motion/Peter Landin buildings delivered combined annual savings of 111,255 kWh across gas and electricity. The refurbishment and extension of the Informatics Teaching Laboratory, completed in January 2026, further supports this transition through an all-electric design and rooftop solar photovoltaic panels.

These projects form part of a wider programme of activity set out in our three-year Energy and Carbon Reduction Plan, developed in 2025 by Engineering & Estates, Sustainability and our Building Management System (BMS) contractor. The plan includes a series of initiatives to reduce energy consumption, cut carbon emissions and improve operational efficiency across the estate, including enhanced building controls, LED lighting and occupancy-based systems integrated through the BMS.



Research

In 2023, renewable energy provided more than 30% of the world's electricity, but faster progress is needed to make clean energy affordable and reliable for everyone[7]. Queen Mary's Centre for Sustainable Engineering answers this need, leading a £23 million research portfolio spanning renewable generation, storage and circular manufacturing. Its international reach includes co-founding Indonesia's National Battery Research Institute, backed by UK GCRF funding, which has run 394 activities and 78 projects, engaging 948 institutions and 15,000+ participants across 38 countries.

A perovskite solar-cell technology from spin-out AeroSolar has been adopted by international manufacturers, while a decision-support tool mandated by Ofgem across Great Britain delivers £0.5 billion in economic benefit. Another spin-out, Methanox, launched in 2025, secured a £1.5 millions investment to commercialised technology that reduced methane emissions from natural gas-powered ships. Togetherthis research is accelerating affordable clean energy.

Education

Students on our MSc for Sustainable Energy Systems are taught the fundamentals of energy sustainability, as well as the scientific, engineering and technical aspects of creating affordable, sustainable energy systems.

EMS717U, "renewable energy sources", equips students with the necessary skills to appreciate global energy and understand how this impacts the environment.

As a result, Queen Mary students are set up to contribute to solutions for new sustainable energy, perhaps one of the greatest single challenges facing the world this century.

7 https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2026/Goal-07

Case studies

A driving force for green energy innovation: Our Green Energy Hub

Our Green Energy Hub, launched in 2024, is a comprehensive laboratory network of existing labs across the School of Engineering and Materials Science, designed to accelerate breakthroughs in green energy technologies. Positioning Queen Mary at the forefront of Green Energy development, it unites researchers to tackle the complex challenges associated with green energy. By bringing together experts working on complementary technologies such as batteries, electrolysers for green hydrogen production, and photovoltaics the hub has catalysed the development of new ideas and novel solutions.

Since its launch, researchers have secured more than £7m in competitive funding from major UK and international funders, including the European Union, UK Research and Innovation, Innovate UK and The Faraday Institution. The funded projects are advancing next-generation batteries, solar energy harvesting, sustainable fuel production and innovative recycling solutions, supported using advanced processing and characterisation capabilities available at the hub

The Hub has been a driving force for innovation, establishing collaborations with partners including Invinity, UBH, Aquatura, The Tyre Collective, Polymateria, CERES, and Levidian, helping accelerate the development and deployment of sustainable technologies. Queen Mary Spinouts including AeroSolar, Methanox and SODACH are translating research into commercial solutions, extending Queen Mary's impact across the UK, Europe and the United States. It represents a significant investment for Queen Mary that continues to pave the way for groundbreaking advancements and drives us towards the government's ambitions for Net Zero.

Better Value Electricity

As Britain increases its use of renewable energy, electricity networks must find cost-effective ways to meet growing demand without building unnecessary infrastructure.

Professor John Moriarty co-developed Real Options Cost-Benefit Analysis (ROCBA), a decision-support tool that helps electricity companies identify when existing resources can be used more efficiently instead of investing in expensive network upgrades.

Originally developed for Electricity North West, the approach evolved into the Common Evaluation Methodology (CEM), which is now used across Great Britain and mandated by Ofgem. The methodology is estimated to deliver around £0.5 billion in economic benefits between 2024 and 2028, reducing costs for bill payers while supporting a more flexible and sustainable electricity system.



8

Decent Work and Economic Growth

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.



A qLegal volunteer student and start-up host share ideas at the *Externships* programme's kick-off event

Engagement

Through the East London Civic Action Network (ELCAN), Queen Mary convenes businesses, local authorities, health organisations, educators and community partners to address shared challenges and opportunities across east London. In March 2026, the University brought together more than 150 senior leaders from business, government, education, health and the voluntary sector for a strategic summit on growth, skills and innovation, hosted in partnership with Canary Wharf Group and the East London Business Alliance. The event provided a platform for cross-sector collaboration to develop a shared, deliverable vision for inclusive economic prosperity in the region.

Discussions focused on translating national and regional priorities into practical, place-based action, with particular emphasis on addressing skills gaps, improving social mobility, expanding access to good jobs and strengthening inclusive talent pipelines. By fostering collaboration between anchor institutions and local communities, ELCAN is helping to create pathways to opportunity, strengthen inclusive growth and ensure that economic development delivers tangible benefits for east London residents.

Operations and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Queen Mary's commitment to fair and inclusive employment is rooted in its long-standing support for the Living Wage movement. Research at the University helped provide the evidence base for the Living Wage campaign, documenting low pay and insecure work across east London and contributing to a movement that has transformed pay standards across the UK.

In 2026, Queen Mary marked the campaign's 25th anniversary, building on its position as the first UK University to achieve Living Wage accreditation in 2006 and its continued role as a Principal Partner of the Living Wage Foundation since 2008.

Transparency is central to our approach to equality and inclusion. In 2026, Queen Mary continued to report pay gaps beyond statutory requirements, publishing data on gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and the intersection between gender and ethnicity. Our mean and median gender pay gaps both decreased compared with the previous year, with the mean gender pay gap falling to 13.3 per cent, the lowest level recorded since reporting began nine years ago. The mean disability pay gap also decreased, reflecting continued progress towards a more equitable workplace.



A London Social Venture Fund workshop



qLegal students deliver an interactive workshop on intellectual property to Queen Mary students

Research

Across the world, many people still lack secure and fair work, with 58% of workers informally employed in 2024[8]. At Queen Mary, we address this from multiple angles. Our Centre on Labour, Sustainability and Global Production (CLaSP), researches labour standards, supply chains and production. At the Centre for Research in Equality and Diversity (CRED) female FTSE research has informed UK reviews of women's leadership, with women holding 43.4% of FTSE 350 board positions. Meanwhile, the Centre for Globalisation Research (CGR) convenes research on development and inequality. Together these centres generate research contributing to building a fairer world of work from boardrooms to supply chains.

We are a Living Wage Employer

Education

Supporting students to succeed in their chosen careers is a key objective of Strategy 2030, reflected in our ranking of 16th in the Graduate Market in 2026 report. Developed in 2025, our Employability Skills Framework ensures all learners can progressively build the skills and experience needed for employment alongside their academic studies.

This is supported by our Careers and Enterprise service, which helps students develop professional skills, secure internships and graduate opportunities, and gain practical experience through programmes such as Aspire. Across 2024/25 and 2025/26, Aspire delivered more than 2,700 student placements through mentoring, micro-internships, consultancy projects, enterprise programmes and employer-led experiences, helping students build networks, workplace skills and career readiness.

Our commitment to skills development extends beyond the University. Through Apprenticeship Levy transfers, Queen Mary supports workforce development across east London, helping fund apprenticeships in social care and early years education, including six apprentices at Bright Young Futures in Redbridge since 2023.

8 https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2026/goal-08/

Case studies

Student Knowledge Exchange Through Community Hubs

Queen Mary's award-winning SKETCH (Student Knowledge Exchange Through Community Hubs) programme connects students with businesses, charities, public bodies and community organisations to tackle real-world challenges while developing workplace-ready skills. In 2024/25, SKETCH engaged 1,376 students, worked with 170 partner organisations, and delivered 63 knowledge exchange activities, including 55 interdisciplinary projects spanning consultancy, legal advice, enterprise support, training, and community engagement.

The programme gives organisations access to university expertise while helping students build professional networks, gain practical experience and apply their learning beyond the classroom. In 2024/25, the programme expanded with the launch of qHeritage. Since its launch, it's created new opportunities for over 140 students to work with 10 heritage organisations, developing their skills in research, project management, communication and leadership. Another pillar qNomics, provides free, supervised student-led business and financial guidance, supporting entrepreneurs, communities and organisations while giving students practical client-facing and advisory experience. Across the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years it has engaged over 100 students and 25 organisations through its Client Advisory Programme.

SKETCH's impact on employability has been recognised nationally through the London Higher Outstanding Contribution to Student Employability Award, demonstrating the programme's role in preparing students for successful careers while supporting organisations to achieve their social and economic goals.

London Social Ventures Initiative

London Social Ventures (LSV) is a pan-London initiative led by Queen Mary University of London and UCL that supports universities to translate research, innovation and local knowledge into ventures that address social and environmental challenges while creating economic opportunity. Over the last two years, LSV has supported researchers, students and graduates from 15 London universities through venture development programmes, providing £293,000 in grants alongside tailored support and mentoring. One example is the Adult Social Care Impact Launchpad, delivered with Care City CIC. The programme identified research-backed solutions to challenges facing the adult social care sector, including staff stress and retention, and supported innovators to test and develop these solutions in real-world care settings.

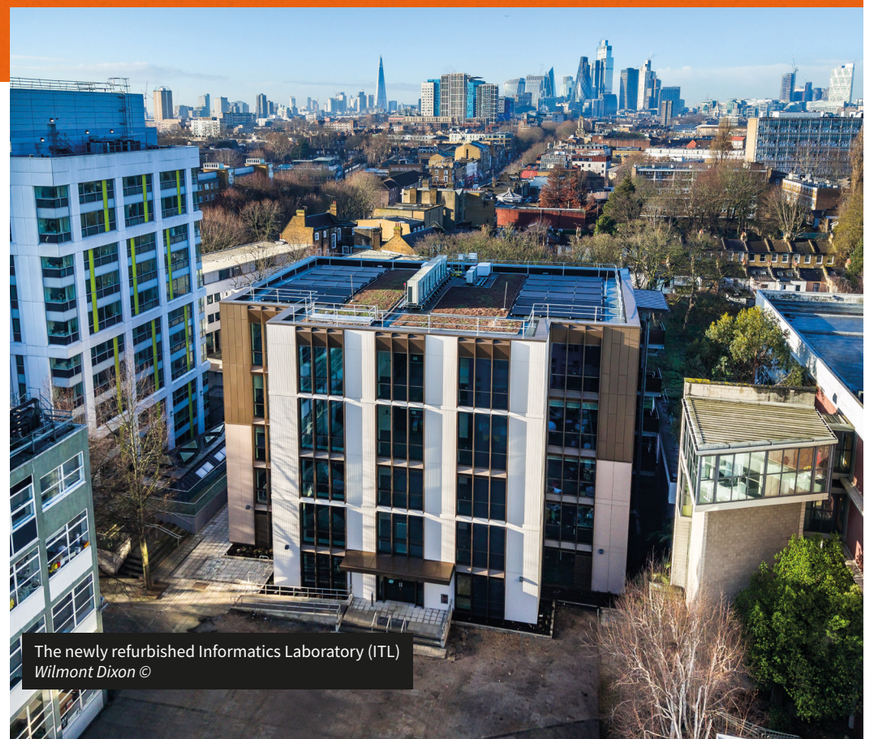
LSV's Catalyst programme has generated measurable economic impact. Participating ventures increased employment from 16 to 42 jobs and grew revenue from £1.1 million to £2.1 million during the programme period. Around half of this growth is directly attributable to LSV, including 16 jobs created and £520,000 in additional revenue in the first year alone. Over four years, this impact is projected to generate 29 jobs, £2.9 million in revenue and £1.1 million in tax receipts, with the programme delivering a 320% return through tax revenue alone. Through London Social Ventures, Queen Mary is helping connect higher education, entrepreneurship and civic engagement to support inclusive economic growth across London.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9

Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.



The newly refurbished Informatics Laboratory (ITL)
Wilmont Dixon ©

Engagement

Through Queen Mary Entrepreneurship Support and Training (QUEST), we are fostering innovation by bringing together expertise from the Queen Mary Business School Entrepreneurship Hub, Careers and Queen Mary Innovation to support aspiring entrepreneurs from idea development through to venture creation and growth. This connected ecosystem helps students, alumni, and staff develop entrepreneurial skills, access mentoring and networks, and launch new ventures, contributing to a community of 238 active start-ups and social enterprises and 78 new companies last year.

Queen Mary also connects innovation to industry and place. Our School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Sciences(EECS) spin-out portfolio comprises 20 companies valued at more than £50 million, while a 2025 partnership with MassChallenge links founders directly with major industry partners and potential early adopters. Through the National Civic Impact Accelerator and the East London Civic Action Network, Queen Mary also works with councils, businesses, the NHS and community organisations to embed innovation in local economic and social development.

Operations

Innovation and infrastructure are central to Queen Mary's mission to generate societal and economic impact. Through Queen Mary Innovation (QMI) and our Business Development team, we help translate research into products, services and businesses that address real-world challenges. Successful spinouts include hVIVO, a global leader in testing vaccines and therapeutics, and Elcella, which developed the first product proven to stimulate the body's natural appetite-regulating hormones.

We continue to invest in the infrastructure needed to support future discovery and growth. In 2025, Queen Mary signed an agreement with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to acquire significant land in Whitechapel. Working with partners from all sectors, this will enable development of significant life sciences capacity in east London, driving better health outcomes for local people and for communities across the globe.

Digital innovation is supported through investment in campus connectivity and initiatives such as the Centre for Excellence in AI in Education, while our commitment to sustainable infrastructure is reflected in five BREEAM-certified buildings across our estate, including two rated "Excellent".

Research

Industry and innovation depend on strong infrastructure and research capacity to convert science into real-world impact[9]. Queen Mary's Engineering Better Medicine theme demonstrates this at scale. Its Centre for Predictive in vitro Models runs one of Europe's largest, most advanced organ-on-chip facilities, works with 100+ industry, regulatory and research organisations, and hosts a £7 million Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) centre training 60 PhD researchers in next-generation technologies.

Spin-out Dragonfly AI secured £5 million for international expansion in 2026 and is used by global brands including Nestlé, Coca-Cola and L'Oréal. Customer case studies report outcomes including 87% lower design costs, 60% higher incremental sales, 43% higher direct-to-consumer website conversion and a 263% increase in ROI from email campaigns. Innovation also extends to teaching: Queen Mary's Centre for Excellence in AI in Education, launched in 2024, embeds AI literacy through a framework spanning understanding, application, co-creation and ethics. From lab bench to lecture theatre, this research turns infrastructure into measurable impact across industry and education.

Education

Our Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management MSc encourages students to think innovatively within business contexts, equipping them with the mindset and skills to create value-led impact. Providing the infrastructure for education excellence, our newly refurbished Informatics Laboratory (ITL), transformed through a £20 million investment, offers state-of-the-art facilities for research, experimentation, and innovation.



Queen Mary Bioenterprises Innovation Centre

9 https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal9

Case study

Queen Mary Business School Entrepreneurship Hub

The Queen Mary Entrepreneurship Hub is helping to build a more innovative, inclusive and entrepreneurial ecosystem by equipping students, start-ups and community partners with the skills, networks and opportunities needed to turn ideas into sustainable ventures. During 2025/26, the Hub expanded its programmes and partnerships, creating pathways for innovation, enterprise and economic growth across the university and wider community.

The Queen Mary Social Venture Fund (QMSVF) is one of the Hub's flagship initiatives, delivered in partnership with global venture capital partner, The Creator Fund. In 2025-26 the scheme provided 19 students with the opportunity to build venture capital expertise, develop commercial awareness and leadership skills. The annual Pitch Competition serves as a final showcase of learning and experience, and this year featured eight shortlisted businesses pitching for the investment prize, with health-tech company DotPlot winning this year's £15,000 investment. Founded by students Shefali Bohra and Debra Babalola, DotPlot is developing a handheld ultrasound device and mobile app to guide users through breast self-examinations.

The Entrepreneurship Hub is also responsible for the support and delivery of key enterprise programmes, including Live Consultancy Projects, and the Social StartUp Challenge, with students working directly with SMEs, start-ups, charities and social enterprises to address real-world challenges, delivering research, consultancy and innovative solutions with measurable social impact. Together, these initiatives demonstrate how entrepreneurship education can strengthen innovation capacity, support sustainable enterprise development and contribute to more inclusive economic growth and resilient communities. The Hub engages with hundreds of start-ups, SMEs, and industry partners every year.



10

Reduced Inequalities

Reduce inequality within and among countries.



A Black Health Legacy event
Rehan Jamil © Queen Mary University of London

Engagement

Reducing inequalities requires creating opportunities for people to share their experiences, challenge discrimination and influence change. At Queen Mary, a key part of this is our Awareness and Inclusion Calendar, developed with Staff Affinity Networks, the Students' Union and the EDI Steering Group. In 2025/26, the University marked more than 110 awareness dates, including Black History Month, LGBTQIA+ History Month, UK Disability History Month and Women's History Month, incorporating International Women's Day (IWD). Through events, campaigns and educational resources, these initiatives celebrate underrepresented communities, raise awareness of lived experiences and encourage meaningful dialogue across our community.

Alongside this, community-engaged research enables people with lived experience to help shape research and influence change. Supported by the Queen Mary Participatory Research Fund, the *Barriers for Young Black Men Seeking Healthcare* project used participatory photography methods to explore barriers to hospital attendance among young Black men in east London. Participants have since contributed to policy discussions on inclusion and equity at Barts Health NHS Trust and established their own community research initiatives.

Other projects have engaged Tower Hamlets residents in shaping oral health and osteoarthritis research, supported parents with No Recourse to Public Funds through legal workshops delivered with Citizens UK, and co-produced research with neurodivergent young people, transgender and gender-diverse communities, and people experiencing psychosis. Together, these initiatives demonstrate how engagement can amplify underrepresented voices and support more equitable outcomes for communities.

Operations

Creating an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive is central to Queen Mary's Strategy 2030. We provide targeted support for students facing barriers to higher education, including Sanctuary Scholarships, which provide tuition fee waivers and living cost support for sanctuary-seeking students. Between 2024 and 2026, more than £90,000 was allocated through this scheme, while over £180,000 was provided through our Care Leavers and Estranged Students (CLES) bursary. We were also among the first Russell Group universities to sign the Disabled Student Commitment, supporting improvements to the disabled student experience. In November 2024, Queen Mary achieved the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) Quality Mark, recognising the University's commitment to improving outcomes for care-experienced learners.

Measures to promote inclusion extend across our workforce. In 2026, Queen Mary introduced a new Reasonable Adjustments for Staff Policy, while more than 250 line managers across 18 Schools, Institutes and Professional Services departments completed training using a new Bullying and Harassment Managers Toolkit.

Staff and students are also helping shape our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion through the EDI Forum. Established in 2024, the forum provides a space for collaboration, discussion and co-creation, with more than 80 staff and students regularly participating.



Participants and organisers from Project ReMake come together to celebrate achievements

Research

Nearly one in five people report experiencing discrimination, demanding research that tackles inequality[10]. Queen Mary addresses these disparities through research spanning employment, public life and healthcare. In 2025, Centre for Research in Equality and Diversity (CRED) researchers analysing 3,336 UK professionals identified a “triple disadvantage” for workers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, while Mile End Institute polling found 38% of east Londoners saw ethnic-minority and working-class backgrounds as career barriers. In health, Genes & Health has recruited 75,000+ British Bangladeshi and Pakistani volunteers, informing a 2024 study that identified genetic drivers of early-onset type 2 diabetes in South Asians.

Black Health Legacy is now recruiting Black communities into genetic research to close a gap in which under 3% of global genetic data comes from people of African ancestry. Research has also exposed ancestry-related bias in cancer-trial eligibility, prompting calls to amend eligibility criteria, and ethnic disparities in breast-cancer outcomes. From career barriers to genomic bias, this research is exposing where inequality persists and pushing for change.

Education

Our learners are heterogenous, with a variety of learning needs. Recognising this, our Active Curriculum for Excellence (ACE) offers an inclusive and equitable approach to education. Further guiding our teaching and assessment design, our Inclusive Curriculum framework ensures all students, regardless of background, gender or identity, can thrive. It emphasises student–staff collaboration, diverse voices and global perspectives within modules, and pedagogic practices that remove barriers and promote belonging.

Studying with us, students have the opportunity to tackle topics on inequality across a range of subjects including as part of our Global Development MA, Global Public Health and Policy MSc and our new Political Theory MA, starting in September 2026. Together, they offer advanced, practical knowledge, preparing our students with skills to tackle inequality.

10 https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2026/Goal-10

Case studies

Partnership for Black People’s Health

Black African and Black Caribbean communities suffer a disproportionate burden of health inequalities in all areas of medicine and public health. The Partnership for Black People’s Health (P4BPH) is a community-led initiative addressing health inequalities experienced by these communities. Led by Queen Mary University of London and partners from the NHS, academia and community organisations, the project aims to reduce structural barriers to participation in health research, ensuring that communities most affected by health inequities play a central role in shaping solutions.

Over an 18-month period, the partnership brought together 19 partners, including 11 community organisations and leaders and eight academic and clinical researchers, to co-produce a research agenda focused on Black people’s health. The project engaged 207 community members aged 15 to 80 through 16 public engagement events, using culturally responsive methods such as photovoice, body mapping, arts-based activities and facilitated discussions. All sessions were led by Black facilitators, held in accessible community venues and designed to create safe spaces for open dialogue.

The initiative challenged assumptions that some communities are “hard to reach”, demonstrating instead that meaningful participation is achieved when engagement is community-led and built on trust. Outcomes included a community-driven health research agenda, new funding awards, a Black Men’s Health Action Research Group, and the podcast *A Dialogue of Equals*, amplifying community voices and priorities. By centring lived experience, redistributing power and strengthening collaboration between researchers and communities, P4BPH is helping to tackle systemic inequalities and promote more equitable health outcomes.

Project ReMake

Project ReMAKE and the Centre for Second Chances and Inclusive Entrepreneurship (CSCiE), is the first University-led initiative of its kind in the UK. Developed in partnership with Project ReMAKE, the centre brings together education, entrepreneurship, mentoring and industry collaboration to support people leaving prison to employment and enterprise.

Through the Queen Mary-ReMAKE programme, participants work alongside Queen Mary students, business mentors and corporate partners to develop business ideas, strengthen employability skills and build professional networks. To date, the programme has supported 66 formerly incarcerated entrepreneurs and over 120 student advisors, helping to reduce the reoffending rate to 9%, compared to the 52.9% national average.

Out of the 2024–25 cohort, 12 prison-leaver entrepreneurs now have permanent roles with Capita Plc. By creating practical routes into economic opportunity and financial independence, Queen Mary is helping individuals build more secure futures while demonstrating the transformative role universities can play in expanding access to opportunity.



11

Sustainable Cities and Communities

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.



Crocheting the air display at “The Air We Inherit” Art Exhibition, presenting publicly available air quality data to audiences

Engagement

As part of Climate Action Week 2026, the East London Research Network brought together researchers and representatives from 17 community organisations, local authorities and civic partners to explore solutions to shared urban challenges. Discussions showcased collaborative projects on climate resilience, biodiversity, food justice, public health and inclusive green space design.

In June 2026, 20 students came together to tackle issues surrounding sustainable transport in London, in a day-long hackathon, partnered with Campaign for Better Transport.

As part of the Open House Festival 2025, Queen Mary welcomed 43 visitors to explore the social and cultural history of the Mile End campus. Guided by Queen Mary academics, the tours highlighted the area’s heritage and strengthened public engagement with east London’s history and communities.

Operations

Our operations are at the centre of ensuring that our campus remains sage, inclusive and resilient. Across the University, we offer initiatives, including our cycle to work scheme, encouraging sustainable travel amongst our students and staff. In the heart of Tower Hamlets, our campus is well connected with public transport options and cycle lanes. Our green spaces and bike racks are open to all staff, students and the public, encouraging all to make use of these.

As part of our Sustainability Action Statement commitments, we have developed and approved a Sustainable Travel Policy for business travel, which will be effective from September 2026, further facilitating adoption of sustainable travel behaviours.



Badges promoting the Children’s Health in London and Luton (CHILL) study

Research

By 2050, almost 70% of the world's population is expected to live in urban areas, increasing pressure on housing, infrastructure and public services[11]. Queen Mary's research addresses this pressure through place-based work on inclusive and resilient cities. The approximately £1 million PAR-CITY programme brings together 25 researchers from 21 universities across eight countries, examining how participatory innovations can strengthen democracy, governance and trust in seven global cities, in 2026, Queen Mary was awarded £1.3 million to establish the UK's first Health and Pollution Research Hub, a pioneering facility that will investigate how environmental pollutants affect human health and help inform future policy and public health interventions.

Closer to home, a Tower Hamlets participatory project worked with 12 local community researchers, while Queen Mary's East London Civic Action Network convened more than 150 leaders in 2026 to build approaches to inclusive urban growth. From contaminated coastlines to community-led neighbourhoods, this research is helping build more inclusive and resilient cities.

Education

Since 2019, more than 250 students have taken the third-year module "Latin American Debates: The Politics of Development and Democratisation". Through contemporary debates on urban development and the Sustainable Development Goals, students critically examine what constitutes inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities.

As part of the Queen Mary Business School module "Cultural and Creative Industries and the Environment", students examine the environmental impacts of cultural production, exploring opportunities for more socially just and environmentally sustainable arts and cultural ecologies. Both modules equip our students with the skills needed to create inclusive, safe, and resilient cities.



A child holding an informational leaflet at "The Air We Inherit" Art Exhibition, co-designed and led by the CHILL study's youth advisors

11 https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/2018-revision-of-world-urbanization-prospects.html

Case studies

Children's Health in London and Luton

Queen Mary University of London's Children's Health in London and Luton (CHILL) programme generates evidence on the health impacts of clean-air policies and translates that evidence into community and policy action.

Led by Professor Chris Griffiths, CHILL follows more than 3,400 children across 84 schools in London and Luton, recruited in 2018, comparing outcomes for children living within Ultra Low Emission Zone with a parallel cohort in Luton.

Recent findings published in The Lancet Public Health in 2026 showed that air-quality improvements following the introduction of the ULEZ were associated with accelerated lung growth in children. Over five years, London children's lung function caught up with that of children in Luton, while the proportion with clinically impaired lung function fell from 14 per cent to 9 per cent, providing the first evidence that clean-air zones can help restore lung development and improve long-term health outcomes.

Beyond research, CHILL has delivered air-quality workshops through Centre of the Cell eaching more than 20,000 children over five years, while a Young Persons' Advisory Group helps shape the programme. In 2026, Queen Mary shared CHILL evidence with government committees, the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights and the American Thoracic Society, helping inform discussions on healthier and more sustainable cities.

Sensing how people move to make cities safer and greener

Most of the noise and emissions in UK cities come from road transport. Dr Mona Jaber, Reader in Internet of Things at Queen Mary, is developing privacy-preserving technologies to make walking and cycling safer and support evidence-based transport planning. Through the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) New Investigator Award-funded DASMATE project, her team repurposes existing underground fibre-optic cables as distributed acoustic sensors, detecting pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles without cameras or personal data. The technology can continuously monitor routes over distances of up to 50 kilometres and is being validated through a real-world east London testbed developed with industry partner T2Sensing.

Her wider active-travel research combines crowdsourced data with explainable artificial intelligence. Five cycling teams collected images and movement data across more than 800 Santander docking locations in London, enabling a model that classified cyclists' perceived safety with 71% accuracy. The findings identified protected cycling infrastructure as the strongest contributor to perceived safety and roadworks as a major negative factor. Related deep-learning research predicts pedestrian road-crossing behaviour, supporting safer interactions with autonomous vehicles. Together, these projects provide scalable tools for identifying unsafe streets, assessing transport interventions and designing healthier, more inclusive cities.



12

Responsible Consumption and Production

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.



Student staff from the Reuse Fair

Engagement

Our annual Reuse scheme collects donations from staff and departing students across the University at the end of each academic year, tackling the impact of waste and inspiring sustainable consumption. Since 2022 the initiative has helped over 2,000 students get what they need to start university second-hand.

Through creative thinking, as part of Climate Action Week 2026, 30 students came together to tackle issues underpinning SDG12. Partnered with the International Business Machines Corporation (IBM), these students applied tech solutions to food-waste during a day-long hackathon, coming up with innovative ideas, including focusing on making the most of expiring food and community food sharing.

Operations

It is estimated, as in Reuser's story, that the UK uses over 3.2b disposable coffee cups every year. Made from mixed materials and contaminated by drink residue, they must be collected separately to be recycled.

We have partnered with Reuser to supply and wash reusable take away cups and lids for the beverages at the Queen Mary Café, tackling this issue. This offers a closed loop system replacing single-use items, with each cup expected to have 1,000 uses. Since introducing the scheme in January 2025, we have used over 71,000 reusable items, including cups and lids.

Expanding our programmes to support responsible consumption, in 2025 our campus services team installed food waste caddies in all kitchens, supporting responsible disposal of food waste across our campuses. We have also launched a new Reuse Scheme in partnership with our printing provider, Apogee, to help reduce waste, support the University's circular economy ambitions, and save money for colleagues.



A barista holding a Reuser cup, available at the Queen Mary Café



Students going through and picking from items available at the annual Reuse Fair

Research

Global resource extraction has tripled in the last five decades, unsustainable for achieving global sustainability goals[12]. Queen Mary's Centre for Sustainable Engineering is helping to tackle overconsumption through the development of circular materials that cut reliance on fossil-derived resources, converting biomass, recycled plastics and tyre-wear particles, a six-million-tonne waste stream, into batteries and sensors. In the fashion sector, researchers are developing circular design frameworks to improve the recyclability of trainers, tackling waste at the product design stage.

Extending beyond the lab, research is reaching industry, every day consumption and policy. Spin-out EcoBarrier's EcoBarrier-Food™ coating, shown at the 2026 Advanced Materials Show to 4,000 visitors, offers an alternative to plastic packaging, while research on household food waste guides local authorities, housing associations and retailers on interventions that work at scale. From materials labs to household kitchens, this researchers at Queen Mary are helping to close the loop across the full resource lifecycle.

Education

Queen Mary equips students with the knowledge and skills needed to support more responsible patterns of production and consumption across disciplines. Students on our International Marketing and Business Strategies MSc undertake the *Sustainability Marketing, Ethics and CSR* module. Delivered across four cohorts so far, to over 300 students, students develop sustainability analyses based on their own cultural, organisational, or professional contexts. Throughout the course, students develop competence in interpreting organisational sustainability, with graduates progressing into sustainability and consumer-focused positions.

At the Centre for Commercial Law Studies, modules including Law and Ethics in Business and Finance and Sustainable Finance and the Corporation engage students with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Combining this with responsible business conduct and sustainable finance regulation, they're able to understand how law, governance and markets can drive more sustainable economic systems.

12 https://www.unep.org/resources/Global-Resource-Outlook-2024

Case study

LEAF Gold Labs – Maillard Lab

Research laboratories are among the most resource-intensive spaces on a university campus. Through the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF), Queen Mary is helping research and teaching labs reduce energy use, waste and environmental impacts while maintaining high standards of research quality. LEAF provides a nationally recognised framework for improving laboratory sustainability and enables participating teams to measure both carbon and financial savings across equipment, IT, waste, and water.

By 2025/26, Queen Mary achieved five gold LEAF awards, recognising laboratories that have embedded sustainability into their day-to-day operations.

The Maillard Lab is one of the first research labs to achieve a Gold award having introduced measure including, reducing single-use consumables through updated operating procedures, prioritising local symposiums and conferences to reduce international travel, using existing public data instead of generating new data, where possible, installing equipment timers and keeping strict inventories to avoid wastage. Together, these initiatives show how laboratories can reduce their environmental impact while supporting world-class research.



13

Climate Action

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.



A student and grounds staff planting seeds as part of a planting workshop during Climate Action Week

Engagement

Addressing climate change requires informed, engaged and empowered communities. Through Climate Action Week, our flagship annual programme for climate engagement, we bring together students, staff, researchers and the public to explore solutions to the climate crisis. In 2026, over 450 attendees participated in over 20 events including planting workshops, an Artic photography gallery and live link to researchers in the Arctic and creating climate stop-motion animations.

Beyond the university, during London Climate Action Week 2026, People's Palace Projects delivered six events exploring climate justice, cultural heritage and sustainable futures. Highlights included an international seminar on culture and climate change, delivered with Brazil's Ministry of Culture, and the UK premiere of the award-winning documentary *Replikka*.

Committed to international climate action, we have sent a delegation of academics and researchers to the Conference of the Parties (COP). There, they share their varied expertise in global sustainability, ranging from climate policy to culture-based climate action, engaging in cross-sectoral dialogues furthering progress on the SDGs. Through side events, public engagement activities and international collaborations, the delegation helped bring Queen Mary's research into conversations shaping responses to the climate crisis. Together, these initiatives help connect research, policy and public engagement, supporting greater awareness, collaboration and action on climate change.

Operations

We are committed to achieving carbon net zero by 2050 and continue to support the government's net zero ambitions.

In 2025/26 we achieved a 37 per cent reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions, compared to our 2018/19 baseline, with an overall reduction of 5,697 tonnes of CO_2e and a reduction of 17% compared to 2024/25. These results demonstrate sustained, measurable progress towards reducing the university's carbon footprint.



Outside COP30 in Brazil



Activists and artists from the Amazon convene as part of the People's Palace Projects/ Amazonia de Pé's project
Viviane Borari ©

Research

The past decade has been the warmest on record, yet global emissions remain off track to meet climate goals[13]. Queen Mary researchers are addressing the climate crisis through interdisciplinary research spanning policy, justice, economics and culture. From shaping ecocide law reform proposals through the Centre for Climate Crime and Climate Justice, to examining the relationship between inequality and the green transition through the Centre for Globalisation Research, our researchers are helping inform more equitable and effective climate responses.

Queen Mary's expertise also informs national policymaking through its UK Parliament Thematic Research Lead for Climate and Environment, strengthening Parliament's access to climate research and coordinating evidence across the academic community. From legal reform to parliamentary decision-making, this research supports fairer and more evidence-informed climate action.

Education

Our Sustainability Action Statement commits us to 'actively embed the fundamentals of the UN Sustainable Development Goals into our teaching, research, our partnerships and all aspects of our operations'. This means ensuring that both students and staff feel empowered and supported with the necessary resources. Training and resources are available to staff to support them to do so.

As part of our 2026 Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) delivery, we included a session on civic and sustainability in education, helping our educators to embed these principles into their teaching. Sustainability is also a core part of our Graduate Attributes, with modules such as GEG4015, Sustainable Transitions, challenging students to think critically about sustainability, providing foundational knowledge of the SDGs.

13 https://wmo.int/news/media-centre/wmo-confirms-2025-was-one-of-warmest-years-record

Case studies

Connecting Culture, Climate Action and Indigenous Knowledge

Through its Climate Action and Indigenous Exchange programme, People's Palace Projects (PPP) has helped advance international recognition of culture as a dimension of climate governance and sustainable development.

In 2025, PPP partnered with Amazônia de Pé to bring together Indigenous leaders, artists, cultural practitioners and researchers in the Brazilian Amazon. The collaboration produced public resources and a short documentary highlighting the role of culture in protecting territories and responding to the climate crisis ahead of COP30. PPP also delivered Arts for Climate with Julie's Bicycle as part of the UK-Brazil Season of Culture, supporting artists to develop creative responses to climate change.

Through a two-year partnership with Brazil's Ministry of Culture, PPP curated international seminars during Brazil's G20 and COP30 presidencies and delivered a first-of-its-kind strategic training programme on Culture and Climate Change for Minister Margareth Menezes and senior ministry leaders. This work supported the development of a ten-year framework to integrate culture into national climate policy.

Thiago Jesus, Co-Director and Lead for Indigenous Exchange and Climate Action, authored UNESCO's commissioned chapter on culture and climate change for the 2025 report *Culture: The Missing SDG*. At COP30, PPP participated in ten official Blue Zone events, including the launch of the award-winning documentary *Replika* and the Indigenous-led VR experience *Kamukuwaká: A Call of the Forest*, demonstrating how culture can inspire more inclusive and effective responses to the climate crisis.

The hidden climate cost of war

Military activity is one of the world's most overlooked sources of greenhouse gas emissions, yet it has historically been excluded from international climate reporting. Through the UKRI-ESRC funded *Concrete Impacts* and *Critically Green* projects, Dr Ben Neimark has helped change that. His research produced some of the first peer-reviewed methods for quantifying military emissions and demonstrated that the United States military emits more greenhouse gases than many medium-sized countries. By exposing how military emissions are routinely omitted from climate accounting, his work has challenged a major blind spot in international climate policy.

Beyond academia, Dr Neimark has made these emissions visible through policy briefs, public engagement and the platform militaryemissions.org. His research has informed discussions at successive UN Climate Conferences (COP27-COP29), contributed to UN climate stocktake discussions, and generated more than 860 media mentions worldwide.

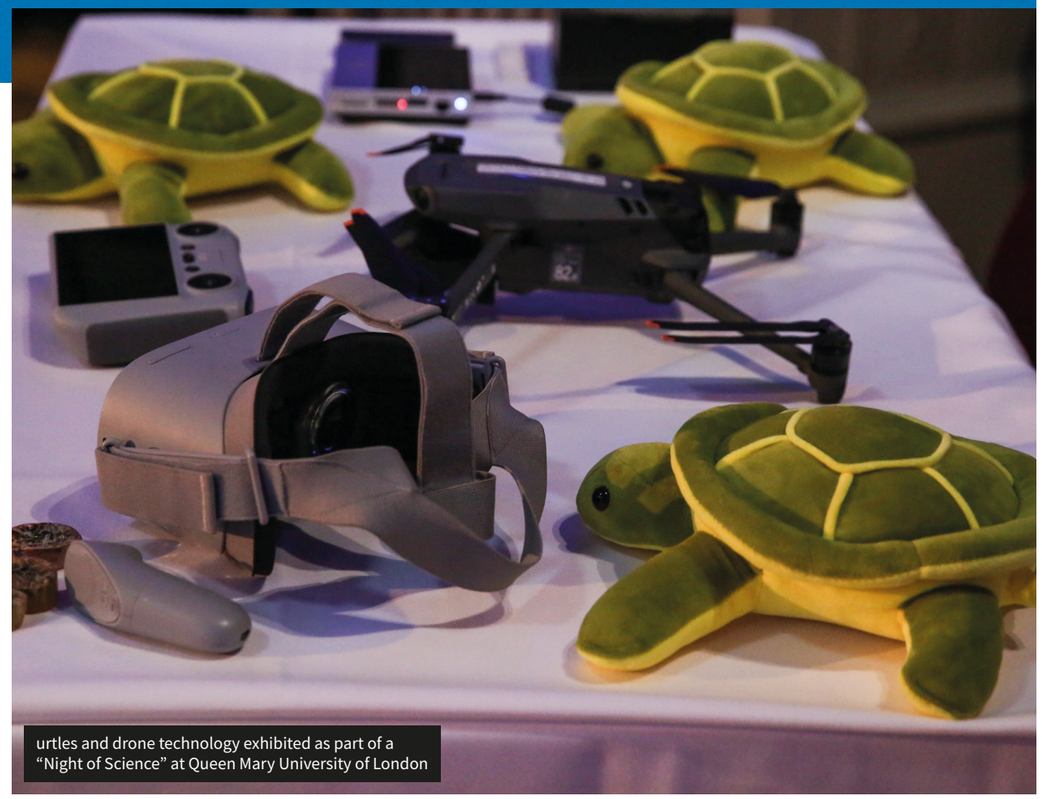
Extending impact into international law, research on emissions associated with the Gaza conflict was cited in proceedings before the International Court of Justice and helped shape debate around environmental accountability during armed conflict. By bringing military emissions into climate policy, legal frameworks and public debate, Dr Neimark's work is helping ensure this major source of greenhouse gases is no longer overlooked in global climate action.



14

Life Below Water

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.



urtles and drone technology exhibited as part of a “Night of Science” at Queen Mary University of London

Engagement

Protecting life below water requires both public understanding of marine ecosystems and ensuring coastal communities can participate in conversations about their future. Across Queen Mary, researchers are using innovative approaches to engage people with marine conservation and ocean justice.

Created by Dr Kostas Papafitsoros, the TurtleTurtle Photo-Identification Game introduces players to marine science and sea turtle conservation through an interactive challenge to identify individual turtles using their unique markings. As players learn about turtle behaviour, life histories and conservation challenges, they also develop skills used in real-world citizen science. Since its launch, the game has engaged more than 500 participants and has expanded through partnerships with conservation organisations, including TurtleWatch Egypt, broadening its reach and impact.

Elsewhere, Dr Nina Ramesh has worked with artists, photographers and fishing communities on India’s Coromandel Coast to tell stories of life, work and environmental change through ethnographic photography and artwork. By enabling coastal communities to document and present their own experiences, the project highlights sustainable fishing practices, raises awareness of environmental injustices affecting coastal livelihoods, and creates space for local voices in debates about the future of the ocean. Together, these initiatives demonstrate how research, creativity and community participation can strengthen understanding of marine environments and support more sustainable and equitable relationships with the ocean.

Operations

We are committed, in our Sustainable Catering Policy Statement, to exclude fish species identified as most at risk by the Marine Conservation Society, specifying fish only from sustainable and MSC certified sources.





Photograph of a Loggerhead turtle taken by Queen Mary researchers
Konstantinos Papfitsoros ©

Research

Oceans cover more than 70% of Earth's surface and support three billion livelihoods, yet pollution, overfishing and climate change threaten marine ecosystems[14]. Queen Mary's research addresses these threats, from rivers to open ocean. The Preventing Plastic Pollution programme worked with 18 organisations, removing 107 tonnes of plastic and cleaning 1,469 km of rivers.

A Notpla collaboration advances seaweed packaging used at events and food-delivery platforms. Internationally, PinkSIES tracks Pacific pink salmon's spread into the Arctic and North Atlantic, informing Arctic Council guidance on the invasive species. From riverbanks to Arctic waters, this research is building the evidence base to protect ocean life at every scale.

Education

Our students are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to address challenges facing aquatic and marine environments. Students on our Water and Environmental Management MSc develop advanced interdisciplinary knowledge of the scientific, policy, and economic context for global water resource issues. Whilst engaging with top-tier events, networks and organisations in water and environmental management, students build in-depth understanding of the interconnected global challenges of climate change, pollution and habitat loss.

At undergraduate level, modules such as *Nature-based Climate Solutions* (GEG6232) explore how ecosystems can contribute to climate mitigation, adaptation and environmental resilience, helping students understand the links between biodiversity, water systems and sustainable environmental management. Together, these learning opportunities prepare graduates to tackle interconnected environmental challenges affecting freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems.

14 https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal14

Case studies

The Turtle Project: Protecting the world's largest loggerhead nesting ground

Loggerhead sea turtles face persistent threats from fishing bycatch, habitat loss and marine pollution. Since 2010, Queen Mary's Eizaguirre Lab has worked with conservation NGOs across Cabo Verde, the University of Cabo Verde and the National Institute of the Sea to combine research, conservation and community participation.

Long-term genetic surveys across 10 islands identified four genetically distinct turtle populations, demonstrating that smaller nesting populations can contain valuable genetic diversity and require protection. The project standardised field protocols across the archipelago and created TurtleBase, he largest public sea turtle database of its kind, containing information on more than 6,000 loggerheads. Its Atlantis VR platform is now used for research and public engagement on three Cabo Verdean islands.

The project works with 10 conservation organisations, 24 coastal communities and more than 300 local volunteers. Through their train-the-trainer model, 36 University of Cabo Verde students have been trained to coordinate local conservation activities, with several progressing into roles within conservation organisations. This approach has expanded surveillance capacity and contributed to a significant reduction in illegal poaching, replacing military beach patrols with locally led conservation and scientific monitoring.

Current research investigates how climate change may affect the long-term resilience of Cabo Verde's loggerhead turtles.

Sussex Kelp Recovery Project: Reading the seabed's carbon story hidden beneath Sussex Bay

Sussex's kelp forests once supported diverse marine life and commercially important fisheries, but by 2019 around 96% had been lost with bottom trawling, storm damage and declining water quality among the major pressures[15]. Queen Mary played a leading role in research for the Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, linking this decline to inshore trawling and contributing directly to the 2021 Sussex IFCA byelaw that now protects 304 square kilometres of coastline. Since then, researchers have held a steering group position on the Sussex Kelp Recovery Project and contributed to the Attenborough-narrated "Help Our Kelp" and later Packham-narrated "Our Sea Forest" campaigns, helping build public support for the byelaw.

Ongoing work is now measuring the outcomes of that protection. Current projects include a 2026 assessment of Autonomous Reef Monitoring Structures for biodiversity evaluation, a PhD investigating how trawling affects carbon storage n marine ecosystems, a funded PhD applying AI to Baited Remote Underwater Video Surveys for fisheries monitoring, and further research into pollution impacts on benthic biodiversity.

Five years into protection, this research is recording increased trophic diversity, growth in commercially important species such as Black Sea Bream, and the return of habitat-forming species including Blue Mussels.



15 https://sussexkelp.org.uk/about-the-skrp/our-history
https://www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk/habitats

15

Life on Land

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.



Students taking part in the module “Plants, Pollinators and People”

Engagement

Connecting people with nature is essential to protecting biodiversity and inspiring action for life on land.

Through the module BMD606, Engaging the Public with Science, more than 40 undergraduate students have created and run the BioCapture website, helping local communities in Tower Hamlets connect with nature and green spaces. The platform has attracted more than 3,000 visitors, with students delivering guided nature walks, school workshops, and presentations at New Scientist Live.

Staff, students and residents can also engage with nature through our monthly Gardening Club. More than 50 students and staff attended a Climate Action Week session exploring the wellbeing benefits of nature and planting their own seeds. Together, these programmes are helping build knowledge, skills and enthusiasm for protecting biodiversity in urban environments.

Operations

Queen Mary is committed to enhancing biodiversity across its campuses and creating green spaces that support both wildlife and wellbeing. Our Sustainability Action Statement commits us to developing a Biodiversity Action Plan informed by academic expertise, helping ensure the long-term stewardship of our natural spaces.

In 2026, plans were approved to transform Godward Square, which will see the introduction of new planting beds, trees, green areas and sustainable drainage features, creating a more accessible, sustainable and biodiverse space at the heart of the Mile End campus. The project has been designed to provide year-round greenery, support biodiversity and establish a strong foundation for future enhancements to the campus environment.

Alongside these improvements, our grounds team continues to adopt biodiversity-focused planting and management practices. A dedicated conservation area has been established where native saplings are allowed to mature naturally, creating future habitat for native bird species. Dead hedges constructed from natural materials provide shelter and nesting opportunities for insects and birds, while new ornamental trees and perennial planting help diversify habitats across campus. Together, these initiatives are creating greener, more resilient landscapes that support life on land while enhancing the experience of students, staff and visitors.

Research

Biodiversity loss continues to accelerate, with over 48,600 species worldwide threatened with extinction[16]. Queen Mary's response spans species, landscapes and policy. The Centre for Biodiversity and Sustainability measures long-term freshwater biodiversity change, informing England's statutory biodiversity targets. The internationally recognised Chittka Lab translates pollinator behaviour research into policy impact: findings that imported bumblebees threatened native populations through competition, hybridisation and disease prompted a Defra review and mandatory Natural England licensing, with suppliers now shifting to native subspecies.

Across landscapes, the School of Geography uses drone-deployed LiDAR to quantify rewilding: at Knepp Wildland, woodland and scrub rose from 13% to 42%, and a subsequent project measured stored carbon. This research strengthens the evidence base for protecting species, restoring landscapes and shaping the policies needed to reverse biodiversity loss.



Scientific specimens within the School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences

Education

Life on land is undergoing significant stress. As we face an ongoing biodiversity crisis, Queen Mary is equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed to understand, protect and restore terrestrial ecosystems. Within the School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences, students learn from world-leading researchers through programmes including Zoology BSc and Biodiversity and Conservation MSc, developing expertise in ecology, conservation science and species management.

Recognising the growing importance of nature in decision-making, in September 2026 we will launch a new MSc in Natural Capital and Sustainability, equipping graduates to integrate biodiversity, ecosystem services and sustainability into policy and business practice.

Across the School of Society and Environment, students engage with biodiversity through both scientific and social perspectives across a range of modules. In GEG5224, Ecosystem Science, students apply ecosystem modelling to real-world challenges such as drought resilience, producing technical reports for organisations including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). More than Human Politics, POL343, encourages students to explore the role of plants and non-human life in shaping more sustainable futures. Meanwhile, GEG 4013 Planetary Emergencies: From Analysis to Action connects students with environmental practitioners to develop practical responses to contemporary environmental challenges. Together these degrees and modules ensure our students are equipped with the skills needed to protect and restore the natural environment.

16 https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2026/Goal-15

Case studies

Plants, Pollinators and People

Led by Dr Clara Montgomery, 12 undergraduate students received training in entomology, scientific communication and habitat creation before delivering three community workshops focused on pollinators and urban biodiversity. Participants were encouraged to engage with nature and taught how to support local wildlife, including insect identification and creating bee hotel habitats

Delivered in partnership with Pollinating London Together, The Charterhouse, Friends of St John's Garden, and the Clerkenwell Pollinator Path, the workshops reached more than 60 participants, including primary school pupils from City of London Primary Academy Islington and St Peter and Paul's School, St John Ambulance cadets, older adults from low-income backgrounds, and members of the local Clerkenwell community.

Six students continued working with community partners to deliver additional pollinator activities, one student became a pollinator adviser for the Clerkenwell Pollinator Path, and five students are presenting the project outcomes at the national Ento26 conference, helping share lessons on urban biodiversity, community engagement and environmental stewardship.



Queen Mary genetics behind the fight against ash dieback

Ash dieback has killed up to 85 per cent of ash trees in some parts of the UK since the fungal disease arrived from East Asia, a species with no evolutionary history of resisting it. Queen Mary's Professor Richard Nichols, working alongside Kew's Professor Richard Buggs, set out to find whether resistance could still emerge.

The team sequenced DNA from over 1,250 ash trees, identifying thousands of genetic variants linked to resistance. This early genetic mapping was cited directly in a House of Lords debate on tree health as one of the most promising developments in the search for a way to save the species.

The research went further. Studying young and old trees in a Surrey woodland, the team found that resistance-linked genetic variants were significantly more common in trees that had grown up since the disease arrived than in those that predated it. Published in Science, the finding confirmed, for the first time at the DNA level, a century-old theory of polygenic evolution, showing that resistance can emerge from thousands of genes acting together rather than a single mutation.

This work helped establish the case for the UK's Centre for Forest Protection, a £4.5m Defra-funded hub now applying the same genomic techniques to protect other threatened tree species.



16

Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.



The qLegal and qTech students behind the interdisciplinary *Yours Lawfully* podcast at their project photoshoot

Engagement

Queen Mary creates opportunities for citizens and communities to engage with justice and public decision-making. In June 2024, researchers co-convened the world's first Citizens' Assembly on Trade and Climate, bringing together 59 people selected to reflect the diversity of the UK population. After more than 35 hours of deliberation, participants produced a collective statement and 15 recommendations on aligning trade policy with climate objectives, demonstrating how informed citizens can engage with complex policy challenges, providing a practical model for strengthening public participation in national decision-making.

Public legal education also forms an important part of our civic engagement activity. Through initiatives such as Rights on Remand, law students deliver workshops within prisons, helping participants understand the criminal justice system and their legal rights while awaiting trial.

Operations

Council is the governing body of Queen Mary University of London, overseeing our strategic mission, direction and affairs. Meeting six times a year, it is supported by specialist committees covering areas including finance, audit and risk, governance, and remuneration. The Senate is responsible for academic matters, including academic standards, research and academic freedom. Day-to-day management is led by the Senior Executive Team (SET), advising the President and Principal and is responsible for delivering the University's Strategic Plan. Together, these bodies provide oversight of Queen Mary's strategic, academic and operational activities.

These structures are underpinned by Queen Mary's longstanding commitment to social mobility, inclusion and justice. As a university founded to expand educational opportunity, we continue to embed these principles across our governance, decision-making and sustainability agenda, helping ensure that participation, accountability and equity remain central to how the institution operates.

> For startups to receive this kind of support at such an early stage provides an invaluable foundation, helping founders better understand how to protect their ventures and what it's like to work with legal professionals. It is always a pleasure working with the incredible team at qLegal!"
>
> **qLegal partner organisation**

> The Queen Mary Legal Advice Centre provides an invaluable service to anyone seeking legal advice who may be unfamiliar or intimidated by the legal process, and unsure where to start. The advice we received was clear, helpful, and assisted us greatly."
>
> **Queen Mary Legal Advice Centre Client**



The winning qLegal team from the TED-style talks competition celebrate their success with their law firm host

Research

Progress towards peaceful, just and inclusive societies depends on strong institutions, access to justice and respect for rights.

Queen Mary's School of Law addresses this through the Human Rights Law Centre, which has submitted evidence to UK parliamentary inquiries including the Overseas Operations Bill; the Centre for Commercial Law Studies, whose research has shaped financial regulation reform internationally; and the (B)OrderS Centre's work on migration and citizenship. ESRC-funded research on coercive evictions in post-earthquake Haiti, and a co-edited volume, IOM Unbound?, has informed debate on migration governance.

The Centre for Globalisation Research and Centre for Research in Equality and Diversity examine global governance and workplace discrimination, while the Mile End Institute connects this research to Parliament, Whitehall and civil society. From evidence to law reform, this research strengthens institutions peace and justice depend on.

Education

Woven throughout, our Graduate Attributes framework supports students to become active global citizens who can contribute positively to society and public life. Undergraduates studying our LLB programmes cover the Foundations of Legal Knowledge such as public law, land law and criminal law. Through modules on UK Human Rights, International Human Rights, Climate Justice, Justice, and Ethics graduates are prepared to support fairer, more accountable and inclusive institutions. Delivered through the department of sociology, politics and international relations, the civil society placement module gives final-year undergraduate students practical experience in community organizing and political activism through placements with local civil society groups like Citizens UK.

QLegal, our award-winning pro bono commercial law clinic, focuses on innovation and societal impact. More than 200 postgraduates each year work with clients including Greentech, medtech and creative startups, to provide free legal and business support. Through delivering tailored advice, interactive workshops and free resources, students learn by doing, with over 40 students taking part in externships, six of which were paid. Together, our experiential learning opportunities and degrees equip students with the skills necessary to contribute to peace, justice and strong institutions.

Case studies

Queen Mary Legal Advice Centre

Access to justice is a fundamental component of inclusive and accountable societies. Our multi-award-winning Queen Mary Legal Advice Centre (QMLAC) advances access to justice through three core activities: providing free legal advice to individuals who would otherwise not be able to afford it, leading public legal education, and law reform and research that improves outcomes for marginalised communities through our Social Justice Policy Clinic.

In 2025/26, it triaged 3,000 enquiries and delivered 580 client appointments, its highest level of activity to date. Demand was particularly high in employment, housing, disability benefits and domestic abuse support. Using solicitors' guideline hourly rates, the value of advice and casework delivered by students and supervising lawyers exceeded £2 million.

Alongside casework, the Centre helps communities better understand and navigate the law. In 2025/26, trained student volunteers reached more than 2,200 people through workshops in schools, prisons and community settings. Through the Social Justice Policy Clinic, students also contributed to evidence submissions on issues including access to justice, environmental harms, immigration and children's online safety.

The Centre also creates lasting benefits for students and communities. Since opening in 2006, it has advised more than 6,500 clients, secured over £1.25 million in disability benefits, and engaged more than 11,000 participants through public legal education activities, demonstrating the important role universities can play in addressing unmet legal need.

Holding Powerful Institutions to Account

Access to justice depends on institutions being accountable when people are harmed. Research led by Queen Mary's Professor David Whyte, Director of the Centre for Climate Crime and Climate Justice, examines these gaps in accountability. Following the 2024 Grenfell Tower Inquiry, his research argued that the deaths of 72 people should be understood not simply as regulatory failure, but as institutional violence arising from decisions spanning corporations, regulators and public authorities. The work highlighted how deregulation and weakened oversight can create conditions for preventable harm.

Whyte's work also brings evidence of human-rights abuses to international institutions. In 2024, he helped convene a Permanent Peoples' Tribunal on West Papua, bringing together 15 NGOs and eight international judges to examine evidence of state violence, human-rights violations and environmental destruction. Its judgment was presented at the 57th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, prompting a formal response from the Indonesian Government. In 2026, Whyte turned this scrutiny towards workers' rights. A briefing co-authored ahead of the new Fair Work Agency found that real-terms funding for workplace enforcement had fallen by at least 58 per cent, identifying reforms needed to strengthen enforcement. From Grenfell to Geneva, Whyte's research exposes accountability gaps and informs efforts to address them.



17

Partnerships for the Goals

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.



Launch of the Equitable Partnerships for Civic Engagement Toolkit

Engagement

The Equitable Partnerships for Civic Engagement Toolkit, developed by the Queen Mary Civic team through Research England's National Civic Impact Accelerator (NCIA) programme, alongside Queen Mary's Research with East London Communities: Place-based Guidance and Resources, provides staff, researchers and students with a strong foundation for building meaningful, community-centred partnerships.

The toolkit offers practical principles, exercises and tools to support fairer, more trusting and impactful collaborations between universities, community organisations and civic partners, helping to ensure that expertise, resources and recognition are shared equitably. Queen Mary's place-based guidance complements this by grounding research practice in the realities, strengths and diversity of east London's communities, supporting researchers to work in partnership with local people and organisations in ways that value lived experience, local expertise and place-based knowledge.

Together with the Centre for Creative Collaboration, which brings researchers, artists, cultural organisations and communities together through innovative partnerships across east London and beyond, these resources foster a culture of inclusive, interdisciplinary and publicly engaged practice. By embedding equitable partnership principles, community knowledge and creative collaboration at the heart of research, they help researchers co-produce knowledge and generate meaningful social, cultural and civic impact.

Operations

Queen Mary is a signatory of the Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice, and is committed to embed sustainability in research in line with the six priority areas of the Concordat and collaborate with the sector to drive a just environmental transition.

Research

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals depends on partnerships connecting universities, communities, governments and industry to translate research into impact.

Queen Mary achieved the highest score in the 2025 Knowledge Exchange Framework for IP and commercialisation, research partnerships and community engagement. The East London Research Network (ELRN) connects researchers and partners around local priorities with global relevance. Working with local authorities, the NHS and charities, ELRN supports research across the SDGs: evaluating Universal Free School Meals' impact on attendance, developing BlueGreenE17 for urban biodiversity, tackling household overcrowding in north east London, and co-producing the Partnership for Black People's Health. Rooted in east London yet connected globally through People's Palace Projects, this model turns local partnership into global benefit. From school meals to climate platforms, these partnerships show that global goals are achieved through local action.

Education

Queen Mary's commitment to widening participation and educational excellence is strengthened through a network of local and global partnerships that create pathways into higher education, skills development and high-skilled employment.

In east London, collaborations with the Drapers' Company, London City Institute of Technology (Newham College) and New City College support learners at different stages of their educational journey, helping to widen access to higher education and equip students with the skills needed for future careers.

Through our work with Barts Health NHS Trust and Imperial College London on the Greater London Authority's Life Sciences Talent Board, Queen Mary is also helping to develop a diverse pipeline of talent for the capital's growing life sciences sector.

Internationally, partnerships with institutions including O.P. Jindal Global University and Nanchang University provide opportunities for globally connected learning, research and student mobility. In 2025, Queen Mary and Nanchang University launched a Joint Education Institute in China, building on a partnership that has engaged almost 4,000 students since 2013.



Queen Mary hosts an annual workshop introducing the campaign priorities of East London Citizens to align with academic research interests

Case studies

Strategic partnership with Citizens UK

Queen Mary and Citizens UK have built a long-standing university-community partnership spanning more than 25 years of collaboration across research, teaching, civic engagement, and social action. As an institutional member of East London Citizens since 2000, Queen Mary has worked alongside residents, community organisations, schools, faith groups, and campaign leaders to address some of east London's most pressing challenges.

The partnership demonstrates both breadth and depth. It has influenced national policy through research that helped underpin the Living Wage campaign, and has also delivered tangible local outcomes, such as the successful "Save Me" campaign which secured a safer road crossing on Mile End Road.

Citizens UK is embedded in the university's educational and civic mission. Community organisers contribute to teaching, student internships, leadership training, and listening campaigns. More recently, the partnership has evolved into collaborative research and policy development, bringing together academics, students and community leaders to co-produce solutions on housing, migration, health equity, work, wages and youth issues. Through our partnership and initiatives such as the East London Research Network and policy secondments, Queen Mary and Citizens UK ensure that lived experience informs both research and decision-making, creating lasting impact for east London communities.

Sustainability in the Curriculum Action Network

To facilitate embedding of sustainability, Queen Mary's Sustainability in the Curriculum Action Network (SCAN) was established in 2023. It brings together over 90 colleagues from across Queen Mary who are already integrating sustainability to their practice and those interested in exploring this area. Through SCAN, Queen Mary can identify and share good practice in embedding sustainability and promote the wider roll out of education for sustainable development across the University.

SCAN has led work in creating a new optional sustainability training course for Queen Mary. The network successfully secured £20,000 in the 2024/25 academic year to fund the development of an entirely new, co-created and interdisciplinary introduction to sustainability course. The course, Foundations in SustainAbility has been created by staff and students from across Queen Mary. It is open to all Queen Mary students, staff and local community members.

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