

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD ANNOUNCES UNPRECEDENTED INVESTMENT IN THE HUMANITIES

£150 million foundational gift creates the Schwarzman Centre; marks the largest single donation to Oxford University since the Renaissance

- *Schwarzman Centre will bring Oxford's Humanities disciplines together for the first time and house a full suite of state-of-the-art academic, exhibition, and performance spaces, allowing public audiences to engage more deeply with the University*
- *Demonstrates the essential role of the Humanities in helping society confront and answer fundamental questions of the 21st century, including those related to the ethical introduction of Artificial Intelligence*

Oxford, UK, June 19 – The University of Oxford today announced a transformational investment in the way Oxford teaches, researches, and shares the Humanities with the world. At the heart of the endeavour will be the new Stephen A. Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, made possible by a £150 million landmark gift from Mr Schwarzman, philanthropist and Chairman, CEO and Co-founder of Blackstone, the world's largest alternative investment firm.

The Schwarzman Centre will serve as a dynamic hub dedicated to the Humanities – those fields which inform our understanding and appreciation of the human experience. For the first time in the University's history, Oxford's programmes in English; history; linguistics, philology and phonetics; medieval and modern languages; music; philosophy; and theology and religion will be housed together with a new library in a space designed to encourage experiential learning and bold experimentation through cross-disciplinary and collaborative study.

The Schwarzman Centre will be home to Oxford's new Institute for Ethics in AI, which will build upon the University's world-class capabilities in the Humanities to lead the study of the ethical implications of artificial intelligence and other new computing technologies.

The building will include performing arts and exhibition venues designed to engage the Oxford community and the public at large, and attract new audiences. Modern amenities and digital capabilities will finally allow for the full breadth of Oxford's unparalleled collections and research in the Humanities to be shared externally.

Professor Louise Richardson, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, commented: 'This generous donation from Stephen A. Schwarzman marks a significant endorsement of the value of the Humanities in the 21st century and in Oxford University as the world leader in the field. The new Schwarzman Centre will open a vibrant cultural programme to the public and will enable Oxford to remain at the forefront of both research and teaching while demonstrating the critical role the Humanities will play in helping human society navigate the technological changes of the 21st century.'

Stephen A. Schwarzman added: 'I'm proud to partner with Oxford to establish the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities which will unite Oxford's Humanities faculties for the first time, include a new Institute for Ethics in AI to explore crucial questions affecting the workplace and society, and in addition offer modern performing arts facilities that will deepen Oxford's engagement with the public. For nearly 1,000 years, the study of the Humanities at Oxford has been core to western civilisation and scholarship. We need to ensure that its insights and principles can be adapted to today's dynamic world. Oxford's longstanding global leadership in the Humanities uniquely positions it to achieve this important objective.'

Investment in Humanities

Oxford has led the world in the study of Humanities and Ethics for nearly 1,000 years and today offers an unrivalled depth and range of expertise across disciplines. Oxford's Humanities Division draws students, researchers, and faculty from around the globe, with 25% of all Oxford students pursuing studies in the Humanities.

The Schwarzman Centre will co-locate the Humanities faculties and libraries in a newly-constructed building at the heart of the historic Radcliffe Observatory Quarter. The state-of-the-art facility will make the Schwarzman Centre a powerful locus for deep, interdisciplinary research and significantly improve the quality and types of space used for day-to-day teaching, enhancing the experience of students and the academics who teach them. The gift will also launch a fundraising campaign in which the University will seek to raise further donations for the building and the programmes.

This investment will allow Oxford to grow its academic posts and scholarships, helping to attract the next generation of students to the Humanities, including those from under-represented backgrounds.

Author Sir Philip Pullman said: 'This is one of the most exciting ideas for a long time. Oxford, which abounds in talent of all kinds, deserves a proper centre for the study and celebration of the humanities. This is a time when technology is making new media, new forms of communication, new ways of thinking available to a much wider range of students and citizens than ever before, but also when the roots of humane study need nourishing and strengthening – and indeed protecting – in a world that sometimes seems to have lost touch with the best elements of its past. I welcome this new enterprise warmly, and I'm sure it will flourish and soon be widely seen, and celebrated, as an essential part of what Oxford means.'

Community spaces and cultural programming

Beyond academia, the Schwarzman Centre will offer a range of new public spaces and amenities allowing individuals to engage more deeply with Oxford's collections and groundbreaking research. School and other groups across the UK, as well as global audiences, will have access to a wide variety of learning and cultural experiences, amplifying the social impact of Oxford Humanities.

New facilities will include a 500-seat concert hall and a 250-seat auditorium, as well as flexible performance and exhibition spaces for music, dance, and art. These venues will feature programming from Oxford students and faculty, local community-based organisations, and leading

international artists. They also will provide much-needed space for the public to gather at Oxford for festivals and other cultural celebrations.

New broadcasting and sound studios in the Schwarzman Centre will allow Oxford to share its insights with global audiences and better lend its voice to the most pressing conversations of the day.

Neil MacGregor, art historian and former Director of the British Museum, said: 'This magnificent, munificent gift to the University is as timely as it is generous. The way we make new knowledge is changing. And soon Oxford will, thanks to this gift, have a building specifically designed both to foster a new way of working, and to share its benefits as widely as possible. The new centre will allow the entire family of the humanities in Oxford to work together as never before: and the spaces for performance – concert hall, cinema and theatre – will allow the public to play its part in generating a wider understanding of ourselves and of our world. The humanities are about generosity of spirit: this supreme act of generosity will enrich the intellectual life of Oxford – far beyond the university – for decades to come.'

Solving 21st-century challenges

At a time when significant investments are being made in scientific and technological research and development, this gift recognises the essential role of the Humanities in helping society confront and answer fundamental questions of the 21st century.

One of the most urgent of these questions relates to the impact of Artificial Intelligence, which will challenge the very nature of what it means to be human and transform most aspects of our lives. From our health and wellbeing to the future of work and manufacturing, AI will redefine the way we live, work and interact.

Just as the Humanities helped guide the debate on medical ethics 30 years ago, so they will be even more essential in providing an ethical framework for developing machine intelligence, for responding to the increasing automation of work, and the use of algorithms in all walks of life. The planned Institute for Ethics in AI, which would be housed within the Faculty of Philosophy, allows Oxford to deploy its unique resources and expertise towards these issues.

Sir Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the World Wide Web, said: 'It is essential that philosophy and ethics engages with those disciplines developing and using AI. If AI is to benefit humanity we must understand its moral and ethical implications. Oxford with its rich history in humanities and philosophy is ideally placed to do this.'

Stephen A. Schwarzman

Stephen A. Schwarzman is Chairman, CEO and Co-Founder of Blackstone, one of the world's leading investment firms with over \$500 billion assets under management. Mr Schwarzman has been involved in all phases of Blackstone's development since its founding in 1985.

Mr Schwarzman is an active philanthropist with a history of supporting education, culture and the arts, among other things. In both business and philanthropy, he has dedicated himself to tackling big problems with transformative solutions. In October 2018, he announced a foundational \$350 million gift to establish the MIT Schwarzman College of Computing, an interdisciplinary hub which

will reorient MIT to address the opportunities and challenges presented by the rise of artificial intelligence, including critical ethical and policy considerations to ensure that the technologies are employed for the common good. In 2015, Mr Schwarzman donated \$150 million to Yale University to establish a first-of-its-kind campus center in Yale's historic Commons building, and has also gifted \$50 million to the Inner-City Scholarship Fund, which provides tuition assistance to underprivileged children attending Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New York. In 2013, he founded an international scholarship programme, 'Schwarzman Scholars', at Tsinghua University in Beijing to educate future leaders about China. At over \$575 million, the programme is modelled on the Rhodes Scholarship and is the single largest philanthropic effort in China's history coming largely from international donors. In 2007, Mr Schwarzman donated \$100 million to the New York Public Library on whose board he serves.

Mr Schwarzman holds a BA from Yale University and an MBA from Harvard Business School. He has served as an adjunct professor at the Yale School of Management and on the Harvard Business School Board of Dean's Advisors.

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