

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD NEWS RELEASE

STRICTLY EMBARGOED until 1.30pm (UK time) on Wednesday, 11 May 2016
Royal opening of UK's first major school of government and Oxford libraries

On Wednesday, 11 May, HRH The Duke of Cambridge visited the University of Oxford to formally open the home of the Blavatnik School of Government where he met students and staff. He also unveiled a plaque to mark the major redevelopment of the Bodleian's Weston Library and visited students at Magdalen, one of the University's oldest colleges, where he officially opened its new Longwall Library.

The Blavatnik School of Government is the UK's first school of government, with a mission to inspire and support better government and public policy around the world. Designed by Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron, the stunning new building has already received an award for 'architectural excellence' from the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Professor Louise Richardson, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, said: 'We are delighted that the Duke has been able to visit Oxford today to see some of our most ancient libraries as they are redeveloped for the 21st century, as well as our newest School in its wonderful futuristic building. The challenges facing the world today require sound public policy, good governance and creative thinking if they are to be tackled successfully. Thanks to the generosity of Mr Leonard Blavatnik, new generations of smart and ambitious students from around the world will receive the academic, professional and practical education necessary to improve public policy and global governance.'

The Blavatnik School of Government currently has 117 Master of Public Policy (MPP) students from 54 countries and territories, as well as nine students studying for a doctorate (DPhil) in Public Policy. The Duke's visit was marked by the announcement of a new, permanent scholarship scheme to encourage talented students from the UK to study at the Blavatnik School of Government, regardless of financial means. The new Duke of Cambridge Scholarship at the University of Oxford will fully fund a UK student to study for the MPP and share experiences with other students from across the world.

During his visit, the Duke heard from some of the School's students including Victoria Mwirichia from Kenya, who has a passion for empowering youth in East Africa, and Dinesh Kapur, former youth soccer player from India, who is determined to fuse digital start-ups with better government in his country. Based on financial need and thanks to considerable donor support, around 80 per cent of the School's students receive some form of financial support, with over half of them receiving full funding to meet tuition fees and living costs. Research in the School is also thriving, with partnerships with major foundations and most recently with the UK Cabinet Office.

Professor Ngaire Woods, Dean of the Blavatnik School of Government, said: 'The official opening of the School marks a special milestone for us. The presence of the Duke of Cambridge was a particular privilege, which we decided to mark with a gift that looks to the future. The Duke of Cambridge Scholarship at the University of Oxford will open an opportunity for future British leaders from all backgrounds. It has been made possible by the generosity of Leonard Blavatnik, donors to University College, and the University of Oxford.'

Earlier in the day, the Duke officially opened the Weston Library, one of the University's Bodleian Libraries which has recently undergone a £80million transformation. He toured this

state-of-the-art special collections library, where scholarship, research, digitisation and conservation take place. The Library is home to more than one million items from the Bodleian's historic collections, including two Shakespeare First Folios and four original Magna Cartas. The building also has new public facilities: exhibition galleries, a café and shop. On his tour of the Library, the Duke visited the Conservation Studio and a Rare Books and Manuscripts Reading Room. He was shown a display of historic objects, including a key used by King George VI to open what was then called the New Bodleian in 1946.

Bodley's Librarian, Richard Ovenden, said: 'We are delighted to have welcomed the Duke of Cambridge to officially open the Weston Library. His visit comes exactly 70 years since his great-grandfather, King George VI, originally opened the building. Now the Weston Library is a world-leading centre for scholarship and research and a place for the public to discover more about the Bodleian and Oxford University's unique and distinctive collections.'

Earlier in the day, the Duke also officially opened the new Longwall Library at Magdalen College. The college, founded in 1458, boasts nine Nobel Prize winners among its former Fellows and alumni.

President David Clary, President of Magdalen College, said: 'It is a great honour for Magdalen College to have our Longwall Library opened by the Duke of Cambridge. It follows a substantial and imaginative refurbishment and extension of a building which started as a school hall back in 1851. This has nearly tripled the number of work spaces available for our students.'

For more information, contact the University of Oxford News Office on +44(0)1865 280534 or email: news.office@admin.ox.ac.uk

Notes for Editors:

The Blavatnik School of Government

Learning from world-class academics and expert practitioners, studying at the Blavatnik School of Government for a Master, a DPhil or Executive Education course helps scholars develop the academic knowledge and professional skills required to address some of this century's most complex public policy challenges. It offers the Master of Public Policy (MPP), an intensive one-year graduate degree with lectures and seminars as, well as practical workshops and professional skills sessions taught by external experts. The School also provides scholars with a doctorate course in public policy (DPhil in Public Policy) and bespoke executive courses. See www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/

The donor: Leonard Blavatnik

Leonard Blavatnik is an American and British citizen, who has long taken a close and active interest in higher education. He has advanced degrees from Columbia and Harvard Universities, and sits on boards at Harvard and Tel Aviv Universities. He is also on the Board of Governors of the New York Academy of Sciences where he sponsors the annual Blavatnik Award for Young Scientists. The Blavatnik Family Foundation has supported numerous educational, scientific, and cultural institutions throughout the world, including in Britain the United States, Russia, and Israel. Here, the Foundation has provided substantial funding to Tate, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the National and National Portrait Galleries, the Royal Academy, the Royal Opera House, the National Theatre and the Donmar Warehouse, the Royal Academy of Engineering, the Royal Foundation of Princes William

and Harry and Princess Catherine, and numerous other leading cultural and charity institutions. Leonard Blavatnik is a leading industrialist and philanthropist, with global interests in natural resources and chemicals, media and telecommunications technology and e-commerce, and real estate.

The Blavatnik School of Government building

The building in Walton Street is designed by internationally renowned Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron. Over five floors, it offers forum space for public exhibitions, formal receptions and improvised discussions, and a range of teaching-space types from small flexible seminar rooms to larger, horseshoe-shaped teaching rooms. There are two lecture theatres (for 160 and 80 people); flexible seminar rooms that can be joined up for up to 200 people; offices, and study and meeting rooms, a café and terrace.

The Duke of Cambridge Scholarship at the University of Oxford.

Each year, the scholarship will fully meet the tuition and living costs of a student from the UK to study for the Master of Public Policy at the School. The student will be a member of University College. The scholarship is funded through a permanent endowment generously provided by Mr Blavatnik, the University of Oxford's Graduate Scholarships Matching Fund and donors to University College.

About the Bodleian Libraries

The Bodleian Libraries at the University of Oxford is the largest university library system in the United Kingdom. It includes the principal University library – the Bodleian Library – which has been a legal deposit library for 400 years; as well as 30 libraries across Oxford including major research libraries and faculty, department and institute libraries. Together, the Libraries hold more than 12 million printed items, over 80,000 e-journals and outstanding special collections including rare books and manuscripts, classical papyri, maps, music, art and printed ephemera. Members of the public can explore the collections via the Bodleian's online image portal at digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk or by visiting the exhibition galleries in the Bodleian's Weston Library. For more information, visit www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk.

The Bodleian's Weston Library

The Weston Library provides a new home for the Bodleian's special collections and its £80m refurbishment was designed to create high quality storage for its collections, to develop the space for both advanced research and to extend public access to the Libraries' treasures. In addition to three reading rooms, seminar rooms and study spaces, the library now includes a Centre for Digital Scholarship and Visiting Scholars Centre. The public has access to exhibition galleries, a lecture theatre, the Bodleian Café and The Zvi Meitar Bodleian Shop. For more information visit www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk

Magdalen College

It was founded in 1458 by William of Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester, and has counted nine Nobel Prize winners among its former Fellows and alumni. The college houses nearly 400 undergraduates plus another 170 postgraduate students and is home to the Calvea Research Centre for Evolution and Human Sciences. Its notable alumni include Edward Gibbon, Oscar Wilde, Erwin Schrödinger and Sir John Betjeman. See www.magd.ox.ac.uk

The Longwall Library

It was originally built to house Magdalen College School in the 1850s, and has undergone

an extensive renovation and extension. The building at the corner of Longwall Street and High Street was converted into a college library by Giles Gilbert Scott. It was opened by an alumnus, Edward Prince of Wales, in 1932. By the beginning of the 21st century the library was deemed to be inadequate and an innovative plan to convert and extend the original library was proposed. Funded by nearly £8 million in contributions from hundreds of alumni and other donors, the project is one of the largest college fundraising efforts in its history. The new building by Wright and Wright Architects started construction in June 2014 and has increased the library space more than three-fold thanks to a single-storey extension of the original building and the addition of a sunken quad with study spaces and book stacks.

Professor David Clary FRS

Professor Clary has been President of Magdalen College since 2005. He also runs a research group in the Chemistry Department at Oxford University. Before coming to Magdalen he was Head of the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences at Oxford University and a Professorial Fellow of St John's College.

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