

My time as a Laidlaw Scholar

Emily Doughty - Durham University



My time overall

The Laidlaw scholarship has been an important part of my development over the last two years as both a leader and a global citizen. No programme I have done during my time at University has given me such a good grounding in what it means to be an ethical leader or the impact being a global citizen will have on those around me.

First year

In the first year I found it hard to attribute the ideas of being an ethical leader and a global citizen into my research. Limitations of my research skills meant my research had to have a narrow focus within the UK and the fact most of my research was done alone remotely meant I found it hard to understand how I could lead and be a global citizen through my research.

However as I worked more with my supervisor Dr Thomas Robinson and Dr Adrian Millican I learned about how I could use my research to become a global citizen because of its global implications.

The research I produced during my first summer however was important for my development as a global citizen then I realised. Despite my research being focused in the United Kingdom and in a British context through the Laidlaw programme I was able to present my research both domestically and internationally. Domestically I was able to connect with academics from around the world and was able to consider my research in a global context and connect with them

When I presented my research at the Midwestern Political Science Association conference (MPSA) in Chicago I realised fully about being a global citizen. Bringing my British based research and experience to such an international conference, where I was able to discuss my research within a different context was eye opening, especially since a lot of my research was based on American research. Travelling abroad, especially independently, gave me a great understanding of what it means to be a global citizen and I am grateful for the Laidlaw

scholarship for funding this amazing opportunity.



Second year

In the second year my role as an ethical leader became more in focus. While I had already been putting in the laidlaw teachings into my time at Durham throughout the year, I was tested fully during this project. Leading an independent project, where I had to develop new skills in a completely different field was a daunting challenge. Being self disciplined enough to learn them, along with passing them onto the next person to increase the impact of the project, was a challenge I was only able to do because of the Laidlaw scholarship.

Outside of my independently led project working I also worked with children, leading workshops to teach them about STEM in an age appropriate way. Leading an age group I am not familiar with, as well as teaching them content I struggled to understand myself as a University student was challenging. However by learning with them, and sometimes from them, I was able to gain the experience needed to effectively lead a team. However I always made sure to work with the experts and often worked with them to make sure the children were able to use the educational opportunities in the most effective way possible.

Despite the fact I did my leadership in an action programme domestically, during the time I also learned about being a global citizen. The Common Room of the Great North, while based in the North East, is a global archive for resources on mining. Therefore during my project I had to make sure to be mindful of the history of mining, both the good parts and the more challenging parts of not only the community that I was familiar with, but also globally.

This was a challenge I enjoyed though and I have learnt more about this area because of the experience.

During my second year I was also able to connect with more scholars through the Laidlaw conference in LSE. This opportunity, learning more about others research as well as connecting with others was important in my development of being a global scholar and I am glad of the opportunity.

Outside the scholarship

However I have found that the scholarship has not only had an impact on how I view leadership within my leadership in action project but also on what I do in the extra curricular. All my actions as a leader over the past two years have been built on the fundamentals I learned within the Laidlaw Scholarship as I have taken on other leadership positions.

I now lead a team of over 100 people in a student society. I would never have had the confidence or ability to lead the team as well and as coherently as I have had without the workshops run as part of the Laidlaw Scholarship.

Takeaways

The laidlaw scholarship has been an extremely important part of the last two years. The ability to grow as a leader in such a supportive environment has been invaluable. I have learnt what it means to truly be a global citizen, something furthered by being able to go to an international conference.

The leadership training has also been especially important, and has benefitted me not only in the scholarship but all aspects of my time at University and personally.

I would like to thank the Laidlaw foundation and Durham university for funding this opportunity and I look forward to seeing where this foundation can take me in the future as I continue to be part of the Laidlaw foundation.