



**Oxford for Romania
Summer School
First Edition
Evaluation report 2016**



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Our ethos is informed by our belief in:

- Equality of chances
- Academic and professional excellence
- Responsibility
- Autonomy
- Enthusiasm
- Resilience
- Community Engagement

Intro



The first edition of the Oxford for Romania Summer School was born out of a genuine necessity: to offer opportunities to young Romanians with great academic potential coming from less privileged backgrounds to access **high-quality teaching and career advice** so as to make better decisions for their future.

Romanian state schools operate in challenging environments, with scarce resources, overburdened teachers and huge gaps between learning outputs and future work skills. An alternative learning experience that cultivates a growth mindset could help ambitious pupils succeed even in difficult contexts.

This initiative was set out as a **transformative educational experience** aimed at inspiring participants and raising their awareness of the diversity of career opportunities ahead of them. It also connected young people with remarkable Romanian professionals studying and working abroad.

Our volunteer lecturers and guest speakers

delivered workshops and courses inspired by the **Oxford style of teaching**. The students were engaged in critical, analytical and reflective discussions on different topics.

At its core, the summer school facilitates learning through interrogation, self-discovery, and discussions in both formal and non-formal contexts.

For the short term, the summer school aimed to help pupils clarify their career options, develop new skills, gain knowledge in multidisciplinary fields and get familiar with Oxford academic life.

For the long term, the project has created a **network of professionals** who can provide **inspiring mentorship** for students and empower them to make better decisions for their future.

Finally, the summer school is also meant to bring together Romanians across borders. We want to transfer know-how and expand a **network of people**, whether academics, professionals or students, who bring valuable contributions to their communities.

A unique multidisciplinary Summer School

Executive Summary

21

participants aged 15-18 from 11 cities in Romania (Craiova, Slatina, Orăştie, Lupeni, Cluj-Napoca, Otopeni, Mioveni, Baia Mare, Piatra Neamţ, Piteşti and Timișoara)

17

lecturers who delivered engaging workshops, classes and activities

27

volunteers

1,500

hours invested



10
partners in the UK and Romania

45
individual donors

over £17,000 raised

over £20,000 in-kind

The first edition of the “Oxford for Romania” Summer School took place between **28 August - 4 September 2016**. In total, out of 100 applications, 18 students aged 15-18 were awarded full scholarships and an additional three were offered a place in the programme conditional on paying for all related costs. The selection was based on their academic potential, proven resilience in front of adversity, teachers’ recommendations and financial statements accounting for their family income.

Students took part in in **multidisciplinary activities, workshops and lectures inspired by the Oxford teaching style**. The volunteer lecturers were young Romanian academics and professionals who had previous teaching experience in both formal and non-formal settings. The lectures were held in various Oxford Colleges and University of Oxford Departments.

The intensive programme included a mix of core classes and floaters that students chose. **17 lecturers taught Maths, Physics, Astronomy, Biology, Urbanism and Social Sciences, NGOs and Political Culture, Medical Imaging, Media Literacy, Career Orientation, Neuroscience, Photography, and Music for Film**. The classes were complemented by engaging extra-curricular activities, such as dance performances, outdoor sports and a trip to London.

In a feedback questionnaire, all participants mentioned that they discovered **better career opportunities and gained new mentors**, along with being exposed to the latest insights in multidisciplinary research. They also reported increased self-confidence and motivation and improved communication skills and teamwork abilities.

Application & Selection

100 applications

The call for applications was launched in May 2016, using several communication channels.

Directly approaching schools

Members of the “Oxford for Romania” team contacted their former schools in Romania and presented the project idea. Teachers then selected students with the required profile and encouraged them to apply.

Social media

Facebook has been the main public communication channel for “Oxford for Romania.” Further on, students and teachers shared news about the school on various online education forums and groups.

eMAG Foundation

Applicants were also reached through the eMAG Foundation which has been running a very successful training programme in Romania for students taking part in STEM Olympiads at national and international level.

Local contacts

In Timis County, we contacted the Board of Education, which in turn contacted the relevant schools. In Cluj County, potential applicants were identified through “Gaudeamus 2003,” a local NGO which offers financial support and counseling for promising young students from rural areas.

In total, 100 applications were received. Each application included:

- A personal statement (compulsory)
- Proof of family income (compulsory)
- Reference letters (optional)
- Additional documentation, like curricular and extracurricular activities and awards (optional)

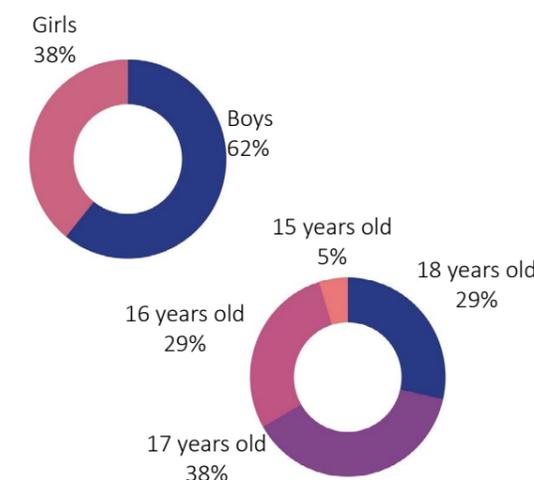
Each application was independently analysed and graded by each of the three members of the “Oxford for Romania” admission team.

18 full scholarships

This was followed by a group discussion where the merits of each application and borderline cases were carefully considered.

Eligibility criteria included age (grades 9 to 11), and family income (max. 4,000 RON or £ 750 per household was considered, although this threshold was rarely reached). The selection took into account several aspects: academic performance, extra-curricular activities, proven resilience in difficult situations, personal statement, personal circumstances and potential impact of the summer school.

A total of 21 students were finally selected.



“Oxford for Romania” was able to offer 18 full scholarships covering the school attendance costs, transportation, accommodation, maintenance costs, teaching materials and museum tickets. Three additional partial scholarships were also offered to students with excellent applications who did not meet the income criteria. In those cases, students were asked to cover their own costs, at discounted rates, as negotiated for all participants by “Oxford for Romania.”

All unsuccessful applicants were contacted with details about the application process, advice and encouragement for the future.

Programme

The school programme had a multidisciplinary approach and aimed to deliver a balanced syllabus and an enriched learning experience. Classes were designed to excite and engage students, as well as to teach cross-curricular concepts and field-specific information.

Through a series of lectures, workshops and activities, participants were exposed to thought-provoking concepts and the state-of-the-art scientific developments. They were also encouraged to be creative, think critically and practice their skills. Overall the school curriculum combined five main directions.

1 Science and Technology

Astronomy (with Sandor Kruk): This lecture introduced students to notions of cosmology and discussed the origin and ultimate fate of the Universe.

Biology (with Andra Necula): This lecture discussed the latest developments in biology and explored how these will shape the medicine of the future.

Computer Programming for Medical Imaging (with Monica Enescu): This lecture explored pattern recognition and image analysis technologies with applications in medicine.

Neuroscience (with Bayar Menzat): This lecture presented a computational perspective of the brain and analysed the latest efforts in understanding its nature

Mathematics (with Vlad Margarint): This lecture explored mathematical concepts used in studying geometrical shapes of various complexities and investigated how these concepts are applied in art and architecture.

Quantum Physics (with Mihai Vidrighin): This lecture investigated the nature of reality as revealed by light and quantum physics.



Particle Physics (with Ciprian Plostinar): This lecture analysed the nature of the scientific method, the limits of our current models and some of the surprising practical applications of fundamental particle physics.

2 Arts and Humanities

Documentary Film Workshop (with Adina Bradeanu): This workshop consisted from the screening and analysis of the role and representation of children and youth in three short documentary films produced in Romania during the 1970s and 1980s.

Film Music Composition (with Cora Miron): This workshop introduced students to elementary music concepts and demystified the music creation process by analysing the techniques applied in film music composition and creating an impromptu short composition for a film sequence.

Urban Development (with Gruia Badescu): This lecture looked at notions of space, community and local development from a social sciences and space discipline perspective.

Photography (with Victor Dia): This workshop discussed various photographic concepts, analysed the clash between heritage and modernization, and encouraged students to explore the power of analogue photography.

3 Civic Culture and Journalism

Introduction to Political Science (with Zsolt Kiss): This lecture provided an introduction to concepts of political science, civic culture and public opinion through the study of electoral systems, political parties and voting behaviour.

Non-Governmental Organisations – How do we change Romania? (with Raluca David): This workshop highlighted the need for civic involvement, the methods available and coordinated student efforts in finding solutions to local problems.

Journalism and Media (with Cristiana Moisescu): This workshop explored basic journalistic methods, ethical aspects, best practices and how to develop critical thinking in analysing information.

Career Orientation 4

Career Orientation and Personal Development (with Mariuca Morariu): This two-parts workshop helped students explore career directions suitable for their interests, personalities, abilities and personal values.

Mock Interviews and Oxford Admissions (with Coralia Cartiş and Eliza Casapopol): This workshop allowed students to understand the rigorous nature of Oxford admissions, as well as observe the process of an admission interview.

Outdoor and Social Activities 5

Dance Lessons, London trip, outdoor sports and activities, Talent Night, Tour of Oxford, Treasure Hunt.

In addition, for the school closing ceremony, **acclaimed BBC Sky at Night presenter** and popular science writer, Oxford professor Chris Lintott gave an exciting talk on space exploration and the quest for extra-terrestrial life.

Daily Schedule

	28 Aug	29 Aug	30 Aug	31 Aug	1 Sep	2 Sep	3 Sep	4 Sep	
Arrival	Breakfast								
		Maths / Particle Physics	Biology / Urban Development	Program- ming for Medical Imaging / Journalism and Media	Quantum physics / Astronomy	Neurosci- ence / Photography	Trip to London	Departure	
	Lunch+free time								
		Oxford Tour and Treasure Hunt	Political Cul- ture 1	Career Orientation 1	Career Orientation 2	Sports & Outdoor activities			
			Oxford Admissions / Mock Interviews						
Dinner									
	Welcome & Intro	NGO Work- shop	Music / Photography	Dance	Documen- tary screen- ing & talk	Talent Show	Guest speaker, Closing ceremony		

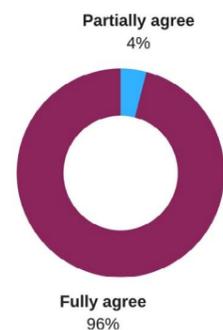
What did participants say?

After the summer school, all participants filled in a questionnaire with their evaluation and points of improvement. The feedback showed huge enthusiasm and determination to act on different career goals. These included applying for

faculties abroad, improving English, taking initiative and getting more involved in community activities. Among points of improvement, a longer duration, better structure and more focus on several topics were suggested.

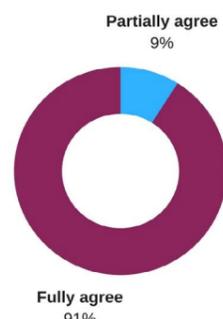
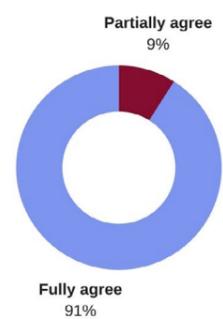
Found new mentors

Improved their self-confidence, motivation and communication skills



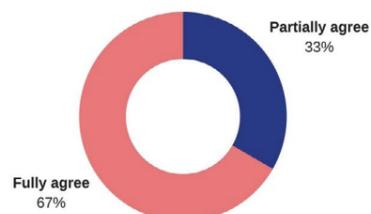
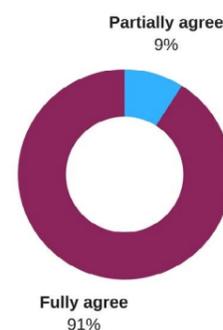
Discovered new professional opportunities

Improved their teamwork abilities



Balance between learning and entertainment

Interested in all topics and activities



“

*What has motivated me most was the fact that I've met people who managed to build a profession out of their passion. I got to know a lot of people, discover talented colleagues with similar aspirations from whom I've also learnt a lot. We learned how to dance salsa, how to make music for film, how to set up an NGO and, not least, how to listen to each other. I strongly believe this summer school helped me **develop both intellectually and personally!***

”



“

*A tremendous experience that really helped me understand that in this life everything is possible with enough grit, but also that we shouldn't let our time pass by without actively participating in solving problems in our community: only together can we solve them. The busy schedule of the school reminded me of how much time we waste every day and how much better we could manage our time. I also met a team of real professionals with admirable personalities and values, people who think that obstacles are nothing more than delays from the final outcome which they never abandon. Moreover, I got to know a group of talented young people with high ambitions who reassured me that future Romania is not lost and that, **together, we can bring positive change to our country.***

”

“

*I got to know exceptional people with whom you can work on anything you want. After visiting Oxford I started to consider increasingly the idea of studying there after I finished high school. However, once I graduate from university, I would like to start a new business in Romania or simply to work there, as I would like to **change the country for the better.***

”



Media coverage

The initial media outreach was aimed to promote the fundraising campaign on Indiegogo, but response before and after the summer school was overwhelmingly positive. We counted over 50 media ap-

National press

- 21 Romanian high-school students benefit from a pioneering study program at Oxford, [Business Review](#)
- Romanian high-school students attend summer school at Oxford, [Romania Insider](#)
- “Oxford for Romania” Summer School: 21 high school students studied for one week at Oxford as part of a programme initiated by three Romanian researchers, [Hotnews.ro](#)
- How the first free summer school at Oxford for Romanian students was created, [Digi24 Opinii si Analize](#)
- Five students from Craiova selected for the first edition of the “Oxford for Romania” Summer School, [EVZ.ro](#)
- Oxford for Romania // First Summer School for Romanian Students, [Civil Sociey Gala website](#)



21 Romanian high-school students benefit from a pioneering study program at Oxford

By [Featured](#) | September 08, 2016 16:20 | 0 comments



21 ambitious Romanian students coming from less privileged backgrounds had the chance to experience one week of education at Oxford, in a summer school, following an initiative of three Romanian researchers, members of the Oxford University. They started a crowdfunding campaign that led to 10 foundations and companies both in the UK and Romania, as well as 45 individual donors to support pupils showing academic potential for one intensive multidisciplinary week at Oxford.

pearances in both local and national press, with articles in mainstream media, interviews and TV coverage. A selection of media clippings and links to original articles can be found below (translations from Romanian).

TV and Radio

- 21 Romanian high school students studied one week at Oxford, [Digi 24 TV](#)
- Interview with Oana Romocea on [Radio Romania International](#)
- Interviews with Monica Enescu and Ciprian Polștinar on [Radio Romania International](#)



21 de liceeni români au învățat pentru o săptămână la Oxford

Florentina are 17 ani și se numără printre cei 21 de elevi români care au învățat pentru o săptămână la Oxford! Cea mai frumoasă și interesantă experiență din viață, spune ea! S-a convins că fizica se aplică și în arte, că poți face experimente dintr-o cutie de DVD și lumina soarelui, că nu trebuie să înveți mecanic formule, că poți să mergi la școală din plăcere și curiozitate!



Scoala de vara "Oxford for Romania": 21 de liceeni romani au studiat timp de o saptamana la Oxford in cadrul unui program initiat de 3 cercetatori romani

de L.C.I. | HotNews.ro | Miercuri, 7 septembrie 2016, 21:52 Actualitate | Esențial

Doi zeci și unu de liceeni romani cu potențial academic și cu mijloace materiale modeste au avut ocazia să studieze, timp de o săptămână, la Universitatea Oxford din Marea Britanie, în cadrul inițiativei "Oxford for Romania", dezvoltată de un grup de trei cercetători romani, membri ai prestigioasei universități.



Scoala de vara Oxford for Romania Foto: Oxford4Romania

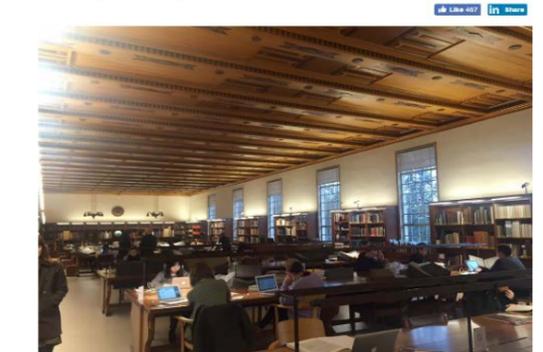
Local press

- Oxford for Romania: first summer school for Romanian students, [Ziarul de Iasi](#)
- Two students from Neamt selected to take part in “Oxford for Romania”, [Ziarul Ceahlaut](#)
- Three students in Cluj selected to participate in pioneering “Oxford for Romania” Summer School, [Ziua de Cluj](#)
- Three students in Cluj selected to participate in pioneering “Oxford for Romania” Summer School, [Gazeta de Cluj](#)
- Three participants from Hunedoara selected to participate in first summer school at Oxford for Romanian students, [HunedoaraPlus.ro](#)



Romanian high-school students attend summer school at Oxford

23 Aug 2016 | by Irina Popescu | Leave a comment



A total of 21 high-school students will attend the first summer school organized at Oxford for students from Romania, between August 29 and September 4.

- Five students from Craiova at the pioneering Oxford Summer School, [Gazeta de Sud](#)
- Two students at the Mircea Eliade Theoretical High School selected to participate in summer courses at Oxford, [Ziarul Vaii Jiului](#)
- Three students from Hunedoara will go to Oxford, [Mesagerul Hunedorean](#)
- Oxford for Romania, first Summer School for Romanian students, [Adevarul Timisoara](#)
- A student from Timisoara will participate in the first Oxford Summer School for Romanian high school students, [Banatul Azi](#)



Cum a apărut prima școală gratuită pentru elevii români la Oxford

În România, opt din zece elevi sunt nemulțumiți de școală. 58% dintre profesori sunt insuficient calificați sau nu au performanțe bune (față de 38%, media internațională). Orice nou studiu despre educația din România stârnete lungi dezbateri, comentarii acide și automatisme. Discuții despre aceleași locuri comune și așteptăm, frustrați, schimbări care să vindece România de abandon școlar, dar și să o transforme, dacă se poate, într-o Finlanda modernă.

Comunitatea românilor de la Oxford a vrut să contribuie la depășirea nemulțumirilor față de educație, așa că s-a mobilizat și a lansat o școală de vară pentru liceeni români.



Recognition

In recognition of its efforts, in 2016, “Oxford for Romania” received two awards:

“Ambassador’s Diploma for Community Involvement” offered by Embassy of Romania to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

“The Generosity Trophy” offered by Timisoara Viennese Ball and Hategan Foundation. The event features one of the participants at the Summer school in an artistic event.

Supporters and partners

The “Oxford for Romania” Summer School was made possible through the generosity of organisations and individuals.

Our strategic partners in the UK

Sir George Iacobescu, CEO Canary Wharf

The Ratiu Family Charitable Foundation

Raluca Ragab, Managing Director,
Goldman Sachs

Anthony R Rowsell, DPhil (Oxon), FRCS,
FRACS, Trustee Oxford Cloud Tutors

Souldern Trust

We are also grateful for the support of:

University of Oxford, Department of Physics,
Prof. Dan Olteanu, Fellow of St Cross Col-
lege, St Benet’s Hall, Oxford and Cambridge
Alumni Association of Bucharest, Romanian
St. John Cassian Orthodox Church
in Oxford and Reading



Our strategic partners in Romania

eMAG Foundation for Education through
the programme “Hai la olimpiadă!”

BMW Banat Car and Hațegan Attorneys
through Hațegan Foundation

TAROM

AQUA Carpatica

Chimsport Orăștie

Significant additional support was received
from individual donors through an online
fundraising campaign:

Aiveen Finn, Alexandra Modupe Adegoke,
Anca Bossons, Anca Fronescu,
Andreea Koenig, Andrei Marin
Andrei Radu Secueșu, Anne-Marie Martin
Anthony Willats, Antoaneta Vieriu
Ben Johnston, Claudia Cîrlig, Cora Miron,
Corina Gurău, Crista Popescu,
Cristian Călugaru, David Howard
Dragoș Cîrstea, Eliza Gheorghe,
Eliza Silvia Galoș, Emi Beteringhe
Gabi Vieru, Ionuț Bădescu, Karina Hurjui,
Kevin Phillips, Lica Ersek,
Lucia Carmen Dobre, Luminița Nita Mușat
Maria Cristina Suciu, Matei Ioniță
Michael Hunt, Nikos Zygouropoulos
Oana Lang, Petre Pruneanu,
Radu Chirvăsuță, Raluca Enescu,
Răzvan Bardicea, Valentin Tudor,
as well as others who preferred to remain
anonymous.

Credit for photo used in the logo:
vineshrajpaul.com

Finances

With the help of our sponsors and individual donors, we raised £ 17,355 in total, with 10% more than expected.

All costs associated with transportation, accommodation and food have been negoti-ated at preferential rates.



Financial Report



Expenses

Planned	£16,068.75
Actual	£15,968.75

Income

Planned	£15,750.00
Actual	£17,355.20

Expenses

	Planned	Actual	Diff.
Totals	£16,068.75	£15,968.75	£100.00
Accommodation*	£7,350.00	£7,056.00	£294.00
Flights	£4,200.00	£4,247.53	£-47.53
Food	£2,205.00	£2,141.61	£63.39
Entertainment	£1,050.00	£1,326.28	£-276.28
Airport transfer	£525.00	£467.00	£58.00
Materials	£420.00	£242.67	£177.33
Insurance	£0.00	£266.76	£-266.76
Indiegogo fees	£318.75	£220.90	£97.85

Income**

	Planned	Actual	Diff.
Totals	£15,750.00	£17,355.20	£1,605.20
Indiegogo	£3,750.00	£2,600.00	£-1,150.00
Private Donations	£0.00	£13,255.20	£13,255.20
Other Donations	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£0.00

** Besides the financial contributions listed above, we also benefitted from:
 • 50 hours of lectures given by Oxford volunteers (estimated savings: £3,350)
 • 400 hours of admin work done by volunteers (estimated savings: £5,000)
 • 15 below-market price tickets offered by TAROM (estimated savings: £1.10)
 • Free housing with Oxford families for 4 students (estimated savings: £1,568)
 Total estimated savings thanks to the contributions listed above: £11,026.

* By registering as a charity in the UK by April 2017, the VAT paid for accom-
modation (£1,176 of the total £7,056 paid) will be refunded to us.

Our estimated initial budget was £750 per person (plus the indiegogo fundraising fees of £318.75). This included:

- £50 pp per night accommodation (x 7 nights)
- £200 pp flight tickets
- £15 pp per day food (x 7 days)
- £50 pp entertainment (trip to London, admission fees, prizes)
- £25 pp airport transfer cost
- £20 pp materials

Our actual average cost was £749.90 per person (plus the actual indiegogo fundraising fees of £220.90). Taking into account the estimated savings listed above, the cost of the Summer School would have been £1,262 per person.

The team



Monica Enescu (Founder, Head of Fundraising, Volunteer Lecturer in Medical imaging) is currently working as Research Scientist at Mirada Medical, a company providing medical imaging solutions for cancer care. In 2015, she completed a DPhil in Medical Imaging at the University of Oxford. She also holds an MSc in Biomedical Engineering from the same university. Monica has extensive experience in education, having previously taught both at the University of Oxford and at a number of summer schools. Her area of expertise covers Computer Science, Medical imaging, Numerical methods and C++.



Ciprian Ploștinar (Founder, Volunteer Lecturer in Physics) is an Oxford alumnus, having obtained his DPhil in Particle Physics. He is currently a senior scientist at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, designing the next generation of particle accelerators. He is heavily involved in a number of major international projects in Europe, North America and Asia. In addition, he holds a visiting academic position at the John Adams Institute, University of Oxford and takes part in a number of educational and science outreach projects, both in Romania and the UK, with a focus on inspiring and creating opportunities for young people.



Sandor Kruk (Founder, Volunteer Lecturer in Astrophysics) is an Oxford student currently studying for a PhD in Astrophysics, within the Galaxy Zoo citizen science project. Member of the Royal Astronomical Society, he is involved in numerous outreach projects in both Romania and the UK. He coordinates the British Astronomy and Astrophysics Olympiad and leads the UK team to the international stages of the Olympiad.



Gruiă Bădescu (Volunteer Lecturer in Urbanism and Social Sciences) is a Departmental Lecturer at the University of Oxford, teaching Human Geography and Development. Before Oxford, he was awarded his PhD from the Department of Architecture, University of Cambridge, and in 2009, his MSc in City Design and Social Science of the Cities Programme from London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). His research focuses on dealing with the past in urban post-war reconstruction (former Yugoslavia, Middle East) and, more recently, in societies affected by political violence and dictatorship (Chile, Eastern Europe). Alongside his academic career, he works in integrated urban development in Romania, Armenia, Georgia and Moldova.



Adina Brădeanu (PR, Volunteer Lecturer in Film Studies) worked as a researcher for the Museum of the Romanian Peasant in Bucharest before relocating to Oxford, where she is currently the Subject Specialist for Romanian Studies at the Taylor Institution Library, University of Oxford. She is also affiliated to the University of Westminster (London), where she has worked for the Centre for Production and Research of Documentary Film and has taught in the Contemporary Media Practice BA. Since 2013, Adina has been co-programming “One World Romania”, a festival of documentary cinema and human rights in Bucharest. Over the past decade, she has researched the professional culture associated with the “Alexandru Sahia” Documentary Studio in Bucharest. In 2014, she started to curate the VINTAGE SAHIA DVD series, which rediscovers the production of the studio.



Eliza Casapopol (Head of Operations, Volunteer Lecturer in Oxford Admissions) is studying for a degree in Mathematics at the University of Oxford. In autumn 2015, she was nominated the president of the Oxford University Romanian Society, getting the chance to build a close and united Romanian community. This position enabled her to promote the Romanian national traditions and make them more accessible to the British public. Eliza is also the president of the Oxford Mathematics Society, getting involved in outreach activities for young students as a volunteer for the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust.



Coralia Cartis (Volunteer Lecturer in Oxford Admissions) was awarded her BSc in Mathematics from Babes-Bolyai University, Romania and her PhD in the same subject from the University of Cambridge. Cartis joined the Mathematical Institute and Balliol College in 2013 as Associate Professor in Numerical Optimization. Previously, she worked as a research scientist at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory and as a postdoctoral researcher at Oxford University. She was a lecturer in the School of Mathematics, University of Edinburgh, for six years prior to taking up her Oxford position. Her research addresses the analysis and development of useful algorithms for solving difficult optimization problems.



Raluca David (Volunteer Lecturer in NGO) holds a BSc in Psychology from the University of Durham. Presently, she is reading for a DPhil in Cognitive Neuroscience at the University of Oxford. In science, she wishes to understand some of the mysteries of human consciousness. In real life, Raluca has been involved in environmental protection since high-school when she got involved in volunteering projects. Inspired by the recent changes in the Romanian civil society initiated by the Rosia Montana movement, she returned to Romania in 2014 and founded an NGO focussed on environmental projects. The most notable event was PadisFest, an awareness-raising festival which gathered the support of over 20 NGOs for the conservation of the Apuseni Nature Park.



Victor Dia (Volunteer Lecturer in Photography) is an art-documentary photographer who graduated from the Arts University Bournemouth and is currently based in Oxford. His interest in urban development and the clash between heritage and modernization has led him to projects looking deep into the fabric of the cities, in locations such as Spain, Romania, Poland, France and the United States. Victor has had solo exhibitions in Romania and England and was awarded a CEC Artslink Residency at Columbia College Chicago in 2014. A firm believer in the power of analogue photography, his favourite smell is that of a newly opened film canister. More information about his work can be found on www.victordia.com



Vlad Mărgărint (Volunteer Lecturer in Maths) is a first-year DPhil student in Mathematics working in Stochastic Analysis, Complex Analysis and Geometry. He has a BA in Mathematics from University of Bucharest with a thesis in General Relativity and Differential Geometry and a MA from ETH Zurich where he studied Mathematical Physics with an emphasis on Probability Theory and Geometry. He has been a Teaching Assistant at both ETH Zurich and the University of Oxford, giving tutorials in various topics in Mathematical Analysis.



Zsolt Kiss (Volunteer Lecturer in Political Culture) is an expert in political science, data analytics and behaviour change. He holds a DPhil in Politics from the University of Oxford and MA degrees in Political Science and Research Design from the Central European University and Babes-Bolyai University, respectively. Zsolt is currently the Director of ZK Analytics, a behavioural data science firm specialising in data analytics and behaviour change. His prior engagements include working as a Strategy Consultant at Bain & Company, Research Director at NatCen, Secondee at TNS-BMRB and Researcher at the Department of Politics, University of Oxford. Zsolt has taught courses on Comparative Government, Post-industrial Democracies, European Politics and Research methods.



Bayar Menzat (Webmaster, Logistics, Volunteer Lecturer in Neuroscience) is currently a DPhil student in the field of Computational Neuroscience at the University of Oxford. During his undergraduate degree in Computer Science at Essex University he worked in a computer vision lab where he developed gesture recognition algorithms for the Kinect tracking camera. Presently, he is using computer simulations to understand how plasticity shapes reward- and punishment-based learning in the brain of the fruit fly. His enthusiasm for teaching has inspired him to work as a Teaching Assistant for a Graph Theory module aimed at undergraduate students and as a demonstrator for an Introduction to Programming module.



Cora Miron (Logistics, Volunteer Lecturer in Music for film) is a freelance music composer and pianist. She studied piano throughout her pre-academic years and has a BA and a MA in Music Composition from the “Gheorghe Dima” Music Academy in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Her music has been performed in front of audiences in Romania and France. She has created the soundtrack for nearly 100 video productions and arranged tens of songs for orchestra and other music ensembles. Currently she is composing the music for a short surreal film, and working towards staging her musical “Alice in Wonderland”.



Măriuca Morariu (PR&Communications, Final report, Volunteer Lecturer in Career Orientation) is currently working as an Outreach Manager for Digital Explorer, a London-based social enterprise that engages young people in global issues and brings real science and exploration live to the classroom. She designed and managed pioneering educational programmes and civic campaigns, working for the past six years with Junior Achievement, CADI Foundation, The Romanian Association for Debate, Oratory and Rhetoric, GRASP, and the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights. She studied in Romania, Belgium and the Netherlands where she was awarded her MSc in European Communication Studies, Cum Laude. Her teaching experience includes training, webinars and workshops for thousands of youth, teachers and volunteers on topics like argumentation and public speaking, career and personal development, and blended learning.



Cristiana Moiescu (Volunteer Lecturer in Media literacy) is a London-based journalist, currently a news-desk researcher with CNN International. She mostly covers breaking news stories, such as the Nice terrorist attack and the crash of EgyptAir flight MS104. She was previously with ‘The Week’ and ‘New Internationalist’ magazines. Cristina graduated in Political Science from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London. She writes about current affairs, Middle Eastern politics and all things culture at www.cristiana.moiescu.com.



Andra Necula (Volunteer Lecturer in Biology) is currently pursuing her DPhil in Immunology at the University of Oxford. Before she studied Molecular Biology at the University of York. Her research focuses on transplant rejection and the way the immune system can be manipulated so patients will not reject the organs they receive. She has gained practical experience in labs in Australia, Spain, France, Romania and the UK. In her spare time, she worked in several educational projects in both the UK and Romania, with a focus on Outreach and Widening Participation. Currently, she is involved in Aspire Romania, an educational NGO for remarkable young people worldwide. In this capacity, she provides students and young professionals with career guidance, as well as help with university and job applications and self-development opportunities.



Mihai Vidrighin (Volunteer Lecturer in Physics) has recently finished his PhD in Quantum Physics at Imperial College London and Clarendon Laboratory in Oxford. A Physics graduate from Cluj-Napoca, Romania, he came to the UK five years ago. Aside from his Physics research, he is one of the founders of OxOPS student society, which takes Optics experiments to the public. In his spare time, he likes to draw and play sports with his friends, and hopes to still have enough time for trips to the Romanian mountains.



Oana Romocea (Head of PR, Fundraising) was responsible for PR and Communications at the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford for nine years. Currently, she is using her experience gained in the cultural sector and the education system in the UK by getting involved in various cultural, social and educational projects in Romania.



Iulia A Popescu (Organising Volunteer) is a DPhil student in Cardiac MRI Image Analysis at the Institute of Biomedical Engineering, University of Oxford. Her research focuses on developing patient specific software assessment tools for cardiovascular medicine. Her area of expertise is in numerical methods and programming for image and data analysis.



Mihai Răcoreanu (Multitasking Volunteer) is a fresh graduate in Physics from Balliol College, with a love for music and technology. He is working as a private tutor and tour guide in the city of Oxford. His technical know-how, multitasking skills and insightful stories about the city helped make the summer school a memorable experience.



Andreea Iorga (Social Activities Volunteer) is a third year student at the University of Oxford, where she is reading Maths and Computer Science. Her main area of expertise is Algebraic Number Theory. For the past two years, she has been a teaching assistant at a number of international summer schools and in 2016 she became IT Officer at the Mathematics Undergraduate Representative Committee (MURC).



A big thank you to all our volunteers who contributed in various ways to make the event run smoothly:

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Next steps



Vibrant communities are based on solid values. Our community shares a responsibility to build a strong legacy for the next generations. Having been fortunate enough to access life-changing opportunities to study and work in competitive environments, we would like to do the same for our younger peers.

Our strategy is to provide students who share the School's values with a potentially life-changing opportunity and inspire them to lead by example.

The organising team are in the process of registering a charity with a mission to involve more volunteers from the Oxford and other UK communities of Romanians in inspiring educational and social initiatives. Our community will continue to provide advice and support for the summer school alumni.

After a first successful edition, the summer school aims to become a yearly event with

nationwide reach. As we plan to extend the project, we expect a much higher number of applications. Consequently, additional automatic filters will be added to the selection process, to ensure the best qualified candidates who meet the eligible criteria are selected. In addition, video interviews can be used in cases where further clarification is needed.

Given the positive response that we received from sponsors and partners, for the next edition we want to further improve all aspects of the summer school, from selection of participants to teaching. We also plan further activities which could create genuine learning experiences for young Romanians from disadvantaged backgrounds.

A sustainable initiative depends on the cohesion of our community and volunteers, but also on the support of its partners and sponsors. We thank you in advance for your encouragement and count on your kind contribution for the next edition.



Oxford for Romania Summer School First Edition Evaluation report 2016

