



The Catharine French Graduate Scholarship

A case for support



Introduction

Catharine French died in May 2020 from cancer at the early age of 53. A graduate of Lincoln College, Oxford, she read History and Economics and was a leader in her year. Throughout her life, she was a quiet trailblazer for the advancement of women in business, an advocate for financial inclusion and diversity, and a supporter of development in Africa.

In honour of her extraordinary work and tireless commitment to these causes, the Dodd/French family, supported by Barclays Bank, Lincoln College and the Social Sciences Division at the University of Oxford, are establishing a scholarship in Catharine's memory. The scholarship will support a post-graduate student from Africa, preferably female, to undertake a one-year MSc in Economics for Development at the Oxford Department of International Development or a master's degree in the Department of Economics. In exceptional circumstances, the scholarship may be awarded to a candidate reading for an MSc or MPhil in the fields of global, social, environmental or political studies. The scholar will reside at Lincoln College.

Catharine French

The daughter of archaeologists, Catharine, also known as Cat, was brought up in a cosmopolitan milieu in Greece and Turkey before returning to a still quasi-Victorian boarding school education at Cheltenham Ladies College in Gloucestershire. She was amazed to discover that olive oil could only be bought at chemists and that nobody had seen an avocado. Her independent spirit led her to pursue a career as an economist and banker over a family academic tradition.

After Oxford, she became one of the first female graduate trainees at Cazenove and Co. and was quickly chosen to be assistant to the firm's Chief Economist. Catharine then moved to become Specialist Assistant

to the House of Commons Treasury Select Committee, helping pioneer greater scrutiny of government and advocating independence for the Bank of England in the 1990s. She drafted a number of key reports single-handedly. Later employed there and at the Financial Services Authority, Catharine supervised banks, nudging them towards higher levels of accountability.

There followed a 16-year career at Barclays Bank, where she was Chief of Staff to four CEOs. Catharine ended up as Chief Administrative Officer of Barclays UK. At Barclays, Catharine played an important behind the scenes role in stabilising the banking sector following the 2008 financial crisis, but also consistently moved to



Above from left: The Chapel Quad at Lincoln College; Catharine French at her graduation ceremony. Back page: Front quad at Lincoln College. © Oxford University Images / Greg Smolonski and HMA Tom Dodd (photo of Catharine)

put customers first. She held an important position in rebuilding City banking culture after the Libor affair, and resolved many disputes. She was dear friend and mentor to many, especially young female entrants in the industry, and in advocating true diversity across the financial services industry. Catharine pioneered award winning campaigns on financial literacy.

In particular, for six years as Chair of Banking on Change, working with Care UK and Plan UK, and supported by Barclays, Catharine helped bring financial services to 500,000 customers, mainly women, across

seven African countries and found 25,000 micro-enterprises. She visited Africa regularly, both for business and pleasure. Africa, financial inclusion and promoting diversity in leadership were three of Catharine's passions. These she worked on in her later role as Council member of Warwick University and Board member of International Rescue Committee UK amongst other roles and aimed to take them further forward in the next phase of her career. It is with this in mind that Catharine's family is looking to endow a scholarship in her name.

MSc Economics for Development

This course is the result of an exciting collaboration between Oxford's Department of Economics and Department of International Development (ODID), which is in charge of its daily running. It brings together a successful group of development economists who are members of ODID and the Economics Department and undertake world-class research in a variety of issues, including entrepreneurship, micro-finance, development macroeconomics, and labour in Africa and other parts of the global South. They cluster around the Centre for the Study of African Economies, a premier research centre to which all our students have access.

Over the last 5 years, the Department has witnessed a surge of applications from African students, especially for its MSc in Economics for Development. These graduates have gone on to fill a variety of posts in the policy world, such as Senior Research Economist with the African Development Bank (via a Visiting Scholarship at the IMF Research Department and later a Consultant role to the Government of Sierra Leone), Employment Hub Research Specialist with the International Rescue Committee, Senior Advisor to the President of Ethiopia, and Director of Research at the Bank of Uganda. A large number have also gone on to carry out further research not just at Oxford but also at other world-leading universities.

"The MSc in Economics for Development is a globally renowned post-graduate degree that brings methods of modern economic analysis to the study of some of the most difficult development challenges of our time. Our students go on to work as professional development economists in international institutions, NGOs and governments or to study PhDs in Economics and International Development in some of the best universities in the world. This scholarship will provide an excellent opportunity to recruit talented African women, who will later contribute to major policy debates in their own countries and internationally."

– Professor Diego Sánchez-Ancochea (Head of the Oxford Department of International Development)

Lincoln College

Lincoln is one of the self-governing colleges of the University of Oxford. Founded in 1427, it occupies a historic medieval building in the centre of Oxford. It has been a hub of international graduate scholarship and provides both an academic and social space for students, having founded the first MCR (graduate common room) in Oxford. The college also provides accommodation, dining facilities, and numerous grants, awards and other forms of support for its students.

Catharine was a valued member of the Lincoln College community, and highly regarded by both her tutors and fellow students. Her career and passion for supporting financial inclusion and diversity in leadership, particularly in Africa, is a powerful example to current and future students at the College.



Helping us establish the Catharine French Graduate Scholarship

The scholarship is a unique opportunity to honour Catharine's memory and vision by supporting the next generation of change-makers in Africa to come to study at Oxford and benefit from a world-class education. The Dodd/French family, Barclays and Lincoln alumni have already pledged almost £500,000 towards the scholarship. Coupled with almost £400,000 of match funding from the University of Oxford, we are looking to raise the outstanding £300,000 to establish this scholarship in perpetuity.

We are asking Catharine's friends and colleagues to help us make this scholarship a reality by contributing to the Catharine French Graduate Scholarship fund. Further details about [Lincoln College](#), [ODID](#), the [Department of Economics](#) and the [MSc in Economics for Development](#) are available online.

Thank you for your consideration.

How to give

For more information about the scholarship and how you can support, you are invited to contact HMA Tom Dodd or Dr Nicolas Stone Villani. If you are a Lincoln alumnus/a, please contact the college's Director of Development, Ms Susan Harrison.

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