

NEON Awards 2024 Nominations

Category

NEON Widening Access Initiative (Outreach) Award

Name of project and institution

Queen Mary Futures (QM Futures), Queen Mary University of London

Brief Description

Taking place at Queen Mary's Mile East London campuses, the Queen Mary Futures programme provides students who are under-represented in higher education with a chance to explore their preferred subject at university and prepare for university-level study. The four-week itinerary of on-campus activities allows Year 12 students to gain an insight into studying a range of academic subjects at Queen Mary, in line with their study interests. Students also benefit from tailored skill development sessions, as well as enhanced information, advice and guidance about the career opportunities that exist with different courses.

Why has this project been nominated

We would like to nominate the Queen Mary Futures program for its demonstrably positive impact on disadvantaged students' aspirations and preparation for Higher Education (HE). Launched in October 2021, the programme has seen rapid yet sustainable growth and equips Year 12 (or their first year of Level 3 study) students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to thrive in university. Queen Mary Futures specifically targets students from under-represented groups who are at greater risk to equality of opportunity, using a basket range of measures to identify students most in need of support. The program offers a comprehensive and holistic package of activities: 1.

Subject Expertise: Students engage in interactive sessions led by academic staff and trained student ambassadors, gaining a deeper understanding of their chosen subjects. This goes beyond basic knowledge, fostering a genuine appreciation for the field and importantly, the career possibilities. 2. Targeted Skills Development: Tailored workshops, led by library staff and through in collaboration with charities like, The Brilliant Club, provide a strong foundation in critical thinking, research approaches, and effective study skills. These are essential for university success, and the program ensures students enter higher education fully prepared. 3. Career Exploration: Students complete a dedicated careers module on our virtual learning environment, gaining insights into potential career paths whilst developing a strong affinity and sense of community. This is further enhanced through interactions with Queen Mary alumni, receiving real-world perspectives and guidance. This empowers students to make informed decisions about their futures.

How long has the project been running

Two Years

Number of participants for each year of the project's operation

600 each year

More details

<https://www.qmul.ac.uk/outreach/students/queen-mary-futures/>

