

Name: Bianca-Ioana Constandache

Year 2024/2025 Subject: MPhil Quantitative Climate and Environmental Science

My year at the University of Cambridge opened a new chapter in my life, a chapter called '*I am representing my country, my community, my background*'. This opportunity, enabled by the Paula Browne Scholarship, has truly been a dream come true. From the first days of studying in the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics, I felt that the hard work I put in during my difficult childhood had paid off.

My passion for theoretical physics, fluid dynamics in particular, and sustainability was properly nurtured through the in-depth lectures, advanced experiments in the GK Laboratory, and environmental fieldwork included in my course, my dream course. I thoroughly enjoyed preparing for exams and developing new skills across the Engineering, Physics, and Earth Sciences departments. There, I undertook courses in *Economics of Electricity and Environment, Materials, Electronics & Renewable Energy*, and conducted environmental research at the David Attenborough Building.

I am grateful to have made my mentors in energy, sustainability, and academia proud as a Paula Browne Scholar by developing my skillset at the University of Cambridge. Consequently, I participated in an Early Careers in Energy conference, where I delivered a presentation at the intersection of all of my interests in sustainability, economics, and business. The presentation, titled '*The Triple Helix of Innovation*', was awarded a prize for originality. Furthermore, studying at the University opened up new doors by connecting me with experts, industry leaders, and entrepreneurs-in-residence.

I dream of launching my own technology startup in the field of sustainability, and I believe this education will serve as a cornerstone towards my business and innovation objectives. During the year, I was an active participant in the Cambridge University Entrepreneurship Society and Cambridge Climate Society, where I met like-minded individuals with a passion for finding solutions to today's pressing environmental challenges. Ultimately, I was offered a place in a startup competition through one of the VC firms within the Oxbridge network and met students who have pursued the same path.

I look forward to collaborating with Cambridge alumni and mentors who demonstrate a strong collaborative spirit, a proactive attitude, and the talent and courage necessary to craft solutions for the planet's urgent environmental needs.

For all of this, I am very grateful to Lord Browne and the opportunity to be a Paula Browne Scholar.