



# May Week Alternative

#FeelGoodDoGood

## What is MWA?

May Week Alternative is an award-winning initiative set up by undergraduates at Cambridge University encouraging students to celebrate the end of the academic year by making the world a better place. In 16 months, with the support of over 200 students, we have raised £49,000, protecting over 56,000 people from malaria.

May Week is the last week of the Cambridge academic year, and the end of exams are traditionally marked by a week of extravagant parties, called May Balls. By putting charity at the heart of the May Week celebrations, MWA aims to change the way students think about giving, transforming thousands of lives in the process.



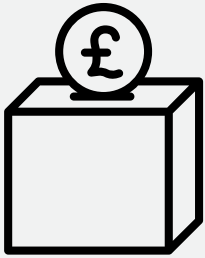
May Week Alternative



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# How does it work?

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We encourage students to donate the approximate cost of a May Ball ticket (recommended £150, although we welcome donations of any size which is significant to the donor).

100% of the money is donated directly to the Against Malaria Foundation (AMF), independently rated as one of the most effective charities in the world. With every pound doubled through matched funding, the recommended £150 donation can protect 350 people from malaria!



We then host a modest Summer Party (see p.5) during May Week, where we come together as a community to celebrate not only the end of exams, but also our incredible collective impact.

Given that 100% of donations go straight to AMF, we rely entirely on external support and sponsorship-in-kind to create an enjoyable and meaningful celebration of giving.



# What are our key objectives?

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1

## ***Direct impact***

Our primary aim is to raise money for AMF and in doing so transform tens of thousands of lives by providing life-saving anti-malaria nets.

2

## ***Put charity at the heart of May Week celebrations***

We offer students a positive framework which allows them to celebrate May Week by making the world a better place. By inviting students to see charity as a central and positive part of the May Week experience, MWA unlocks huge philanthropic potential.

3

## ***Inspire students with our bold, positive vision for giving***

By inviting students to engage with significant giving through this explicitly positive, celebratory context, we hope that students will develop philanthropic tendencies which they will take forward into their future careers, rather than seeing charity as a burden. See the [TEDxTalk](#) of our founder, George, for more on this.



*By putting charity at the heart of celebration, and by inviting students to profoundly engage in the positive process of giving, we can unlock an unprecedented wave of philanthropic engagement which has the potential to last a lifetime."*



- George Rosenfeld, MWA Founder, at TEDxCambridgeUniversity

# The story so far

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## Spring 2018



A group of five students coordinated the initiative and within just a couple of months raised **£12,000** for AMF, with over **40 students** joining.

That was enough to protect over **15,000 people** from malaria- that's more than the total number of undergraduates at Cambridge!

## October 2018



This year's efforts were coordinated by a Central Committee of **12 students** and a growing network of over **25 student ambassadors** across Cambridge.

We **quadrupled** our social media reach through Facebook and an email newsletter; our Facebook posts regularly reach thousands of students.

## February 2019



We were invited to speak at various events, including the Cambridge International Development Conference, the Cambridge Union, and [TEDxCambridgeUniversity](#). At each of these events we displayed our unique approach to charity.

We were recognised with the University's first ever **Social Impact Awards** – see [this article](#).

## March 2019



We raised over **£36,000** (having acquired matched funding), with more than **170 students** joining. Many were making the biggest donations of their lives to date (average £80+), on a level unparalleled when it comes to student charity.

This total is **more than double** last year and will protect over **40,000 people** from malaria.

## June 2019



We hosted a very well-received Summer Party (see p.5) with over **140 participants**, thanks to the generous support of **11 university and corporate partners**.

We have already recruited next year's Committee of **22 students**. We have drawn on the diverse pool of talent at Cambridge and will continue to grow our **network of ambassadors**.

# Summer Party

## 2019



Though our primary focus has always been the donation itself, the Summer Party is the culmination of the MWA calendar. This May Week, our Summer Party brought together over 140 students who had chosen to celebrate May Week through giving.

Given that 100% of donations go straight to charity, we developed partnerships with colleges and businesses in order to put on the event, accruing over £2,000 in sponsorship as well as in-kind donations. With music and comedy groups offering to perform for free in support of our message and a beautiful venue also provided, we were able to put on a memorable celebration of giving.



*The Cambridge Impronauts were honoured to entertain everyone at the MWA Summer Party. It was lovely to be part of such a special afternoon by bringing laughter and delight to the generous students who had chosen to celebrate by donating!"*



- The Cambridge Impronauts, performing at the MWA Summer Party





“Everything about the party embodied the ‘Feel Good Do Good’ philosophy – everyone had a wonderful afternoon, but what made it really special was reflecting on our collective impact. Hands down the highlight of my Cambridge experience so far and I can’t wait for next year!”

- Areeg Ashraf Emarah, Third Year Engineer

Most importantly, we made sure that impact was clearly at the heart of the event – through banners and displays around the garden, we encouraged participants to visualise the scale of their collective impact, which sparked many conversations. We hoped that these representations would help break down the ‘empathy gap’ that often plagues charity focused on the developing world and encourage students to think differently about giving.



“I had designed and printed a ‘What Next?’ leaflet for students to take home, emphasising that MWA could be just the start of their altruistic journeys and listing concrete next steps. We had planned to hand them out as students left the party, but most people picked one up of their own accord – there were none left by the end!”

- Jacob Arbeid, MWA Vice President



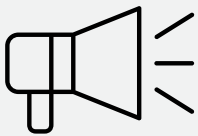
# What do we want to achieve?

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Building on this strong platform, we aim to establish MWA as a central pillar of May Week - this would mean hundreds of students celebrating each year through giving. In doing so, we hope to normalise the incredible donations we have seen this year, and transform students' attitudes towards charity as a result, with long-term impact as detailed above (p.3).

*Put simply, our goal is nothing short of culture change.  
So how do we plan to achieve this?*

## Expand



In order to bring MWA to hundreds more students, we will continue to broaden our publicity operation and network of ambassadors. Through a combination of social media, outreach events, student press and word of mouth, we aim to ensure that every student in Cambridge can hear about MWA and our philosophy.

## Improve

Last year saw us increase the number of students joining by a factor of 3, even as we worked with no budget and very little experience in running large-scale publicity, outreach and fundraising operations. This year, with a bigger and more experienced team, and most of all the legitimacy of a successful campaign behind us, we aim to further double or even triple the number of students involved.



## Partner



In order to cement the concept of charity at the heart of May Week, we will seek out and cultivate long-term partnerships with university and business institutions; their financial and logistical support will increase our capacity to put on enjoyable and meaningful events for a larger number of students, thereby demonstrating that celebration and giving can go hand in hand.

## Inspire

Most importantly, in order to ensure that MWA has a truly lasting impact on the way students think about charity, we plan to put forward a clear vision for how they can take our positive philosophy of giving forwards into their adult lives. By inviting them to embrace charity alongside celebration, and then offering concrete ways to improve their social impact, we hope to empower students to become lifelong philanthropists.

