



Impact Report- The Gaza Student Emergency Relief Fund

Phoenix Space CIO
2025-2026

The Gaza Student Emergency Relief Fund

Overview

The Gaza Student Emergency Relief Fund was set up by Phoenix Space in collaboration with academics in more than **35** universities, education experts, foundations and legal teams to help bring scholarship recipients from Gaza to the UK to pursue their university studies.

Since **August 2025**, the UK Government has enabled **8** safe evacuations, allowing more than **100** students from Gaza to come to the UK to take up funded university placements. In addition, **26 dependents were evacuated**. To operationalise this complex effort (**Phase I**), Phoenix Space served as the coordination and funding partner, securing tuition fees and living expenses, and ensuring compliance with UK Visa and Immigration requirements by coordinating visa logistics, including IHS surcharges, evacuation efforts and international travel. Phoenix Space actively supported more than **100** evacuated students and their families.

Following the evacuation, students were provided with additional support, **Academic Recovery and Stabilisation (Phase II)**, which included essential post-evacuation and academic support. As many students arrived with nothing more than a single backpack, **post-evacuation support was critical**. **This coordinated effort included:** a needs assessment, medical and mental health support, psychometric testing, accommodation, academic support, educational materials (including textbooks and laptops), essential WASH materials upon arrival, cash cards and multipurpose vouchers. **Phoenix Space was actively administering crucial financial and logistical aid**, ensuring the successful transition and the security of the evacuated individuals.

In addition, Phoenix Space provided targeted **financial and logistical support to specific sub-groups** within the cohort: **28** students received full or partial scholarship assistance for tuition and living costs from Phoenix Space, while **40** students benefited from direct coverage of visa and IHS fees. Several dependents were also supported with housing and essential needs. **Together, these interventions removed critical academic, financial, and logistical barriers, enabling all students to begin and continue their studies safely.**

Building on these efforts, Phoenix Space is currently running a structured **employment readiness and further study programme (Phase III)** for **198** Palestinian students currently enrolled in UK and Irish universities. The programme is designed to ensure that educational opportunities translate into **sustainable livelihoods**. **The Education to Livelihoods (ETL)** programme equips participating students with the practical skills, professional exposure, mentorship, internships and employer connections necessary to transition successfully into income-generating opportunities, or further academic progression, such as Research/PhD study. Strengthening students' employability and academic preparedness while supporting their long-term economic independence and reducing reliance on humanitarian assistance.

Our Impact at a Glance

118

students plus **26**
dependents supported
with safe exit logistics

28

beneficiaries received
financial aid for full or partial
scholarships



40

beneficiaries received
financial and administrative
support from Phoenix Space
with visa, IHS and passport
renewal applications

107

beneficiaries received post
evacuation financial
support for essentials from
Phoenix Space

35

universities
participated in the
evacuation scheme

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What We Do

Step 1: University Acceptance (Phase I)  Students get accepted to selected Universities and relevant stakeholders reach out to Phoenix Space.	Step 2: Scholarship Financial Support (Phase I)  Phoenix Space coordinates with students and universities to mobilise funds and secure tuition fees and living expenses in order for students to come to the UK to take up their university offers.
Step 3: Logistical Evacuation Assistance (Phase I)  PS and partners assist in coordinating visas, IHS surcharges, evacuation efforts and international travel.	Step 4: Academic Recovery and Stabilisation (Phase II)  PS and Partners facilitates a needs assessment, medical and mental health support, psychometric testing, accommodation, academic support, educational materials (including textbooks and laptops), essential WASH materials upon arrival, cash cards and multipurpose vouchers.

Continued Support After Enrolment:

Post Evacuation Support, Needs Assessment and Diagnosis: Phoenix Space conducts individualised and detailed needs assessments in partnership with each student and their host university.

- The assessment accurately diagnoses all essential deficits in material needs, academic resources, and welfare access.
- This informs and triggers the subsequent coordination and funding activities, ensuring resources are deployed precisely where support is absent.

Structured Referral and System Navigation (Coordination): Based on the evidence, Phoenix Space initiates and manages the mobilisation of university and partner resources. In this function, we facilitate access and expedite activation.

- **Welfare Access Coordination:** We liaise with university welfare teams to secure and confirm foundational arrangements, including accommodation, bedding, kitchen facilities, and logistical mobilisation (airport reception upon arrival). Before arrival, Phoenix Space coordinates students' initial access to welfare teams.
- **Psychosocial and Medical Expediting:** We make students aware of the University's well-being services, specialist psychological support, and essential medical services.
- **Academic Resource Coordination:** We liaise with universities to arrange and secure essential resources such as laptops (rental or loan), textbooks, and study tools.

Direct Provision and Gap-Funding: This function is Phoenix Space's core, unique value proposition, ensuring no student is left unsupported due to institutional limitations.

- **Direct Provision:** Phoenix Space, in coordination with partners, provides immediate cash-based assistance (cash cards and essential multi-purpose vouchers) for food, local transport, and WASH essentials upon arrival.
- **Fill Gaps in Funding:** Crucially, Phoenix Space coordinates or funds remaining gaps in support on a case-by-case basis that universities, local organisations and corporates are unable to cover, guaranteeing the timely and consistent implementation of the stabilisation plan.

English Academic Support: This tailored academic English pathway strengthens the core literacy required for university success. It supports participation in lectures, research, assessments, and independent study while enabling students to integrate into academic communities, build peer networks, and engage confidently in university life.

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Continued Support After Enrolment:

Education to Livelihoods (ETL) Phase III:

ETL addresses the most critical point in students' journeys: the **transition from postgraduate study into the UK and Irish labour markets or further skills specialisation** (Research/PhD). It currently supports **198** Palestinian students in the UK and Ireland.

The initiative delivers comprehensive employment-readiness, professional integration, and academic progression pathways through employer engagement, targeted skills training, and structured career planning. Students are given exposure to internships and work placements, digital and communication skills development, mentoring, workshops, job fairs, Research/PhD guidance and employment enhancement training.

Component 1: Work Experience & Employer Engagement Pathway:

Students are matched with employers, mentors and professional networks aligned with their sector and aspirations. This component is the programme's core mechanism, designed to activate the educational investment by bridging academic achievement with immediate professional competency. It focuses strategically on compliance, high-value work exposure and robust network building.

- **Needs Assessment:** Each participant completes a career needs assessment and psychometric profiling to map skills and sector alignment, forming a personalised Career Action Plan guiding training, placements, and mentorship.
- Each student is assigned an **Engagement Officer** for continuous, tailored support and connecting them to viable work placement opportunities.
- **Mentorship/Guidance:** Students receive 1:1 or small-group mentoring on CVs, LinkedIn development, interviews, recruitment trends, and Research/PhD pathways.
- **Employment Readiness/Work placement:** Graduates undertake professional exposure, attend job fairs, networking events, and tailored soft skill workshops to strengthen labour market readiness.

These activities are designed to:

- Build UK and Irish-based professional exposure
- Strengthen practical workplace competencies
- Expand professional and academic networks
- Increase confidence in navigating the UK and Irish recruitment practices
- Enhance long-term employability and career mobility
- Strengthen participation and agency through continuous personalised guidance and support
- Maximise the efficient utilisation of all resources



The Gaza Emergency Relief Fund Students Arriving in the UK

Component 2: Professional Communication and Digital Upskilling:

This component closes the gap between academic training and employer expectations through customised training based on needs assessments. Students participate in one or both tracks:

- **Digital Upskilling:** Tailored digital upskilling pathways on premium STEM platforms (Alison, DataCamp, BSD) with training in high-demand fields, including AI, Python, and data analytics.
- **Professional English Communication for Business:** Industry-specific training focused on workplace dialogue, negotiations, presentations, interviews, and high-level written outputs, including reports, formal emails, and proposals.
- All beneficiaries receive LinkedIn Premium Career memberships, including LinkedIn Learning access and certifications.

These activities are designed to:

- Master professional correspondence and high-level business writing.
- Excel in interviews and professional interaction.
- Build competence in workplace communication, including negotiations and debates.
- Deliver effective presentations tailored to professional audiences.
- Acquire 21st-century, market-relevant digital competencies that are transferable across sectors.

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I was living in Gaza, where everything was stolen from our hands. What pained me the most, was the fear that my future might also be taken away, as my education had been disrupted. I am truly fortunate to have found Phoenix Space's scholarship opportunity that allows me to continue my studies, thrive, and pursue the education I have long aspired to.

Farah, Electronics and Electrical Engineering Student, University of Edinburgh.

Dana

"After achieving the second-highest rank among 88,000 students in Palestine's high school exams and beginning my journey in medical school, the war tore everything apart. Overnight, the world I had built with years of effort and hope collapsed, and the dreams I once held so close seemed to drift out of reach.

But even in the silence that followed, I refused to surrender. I searched endlessly for a way forward, writing, applying, hoping-until I found Phoenix Space. It wasn't chance that brought us together; it was persistence, faith, and the belief that light always finds those who keep moving toward it.

Phoenix Space didn't just fund my studies- it revived the parts of me that the war had silenced. It reminded me that even from ashes, new beginnings can bloom. Through this opportunity, I've found not only a path back to education, but also a deeper sense of purpose: to grow, to heal, and one day to help rebuild the home that raised me."



Dana, Biomedical Engineering BEng, Kings College London

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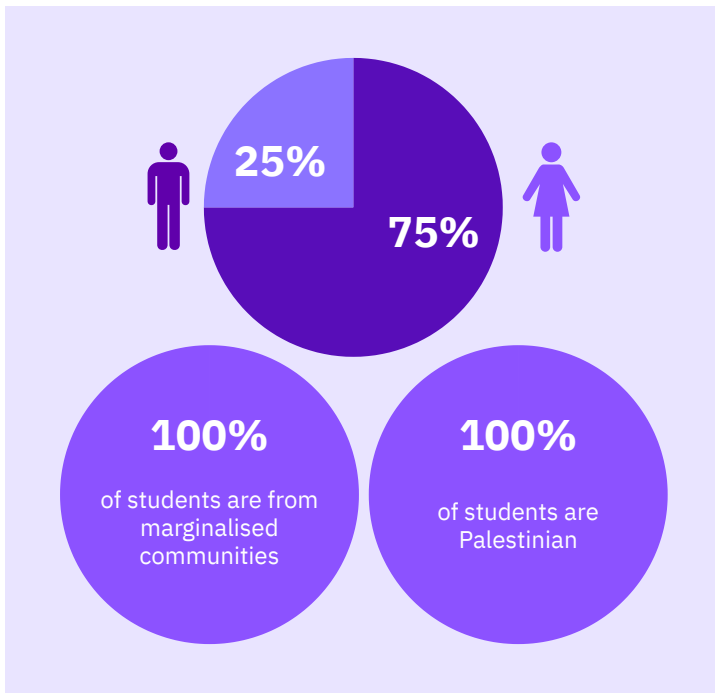
Our Students' Journey From Gaza- Through Their Eyes



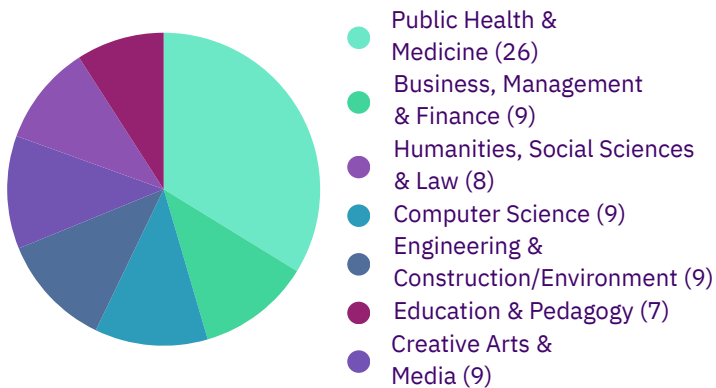
Asmma and Suad, Imperial College London

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Students Demographic



Fields of Study for Students

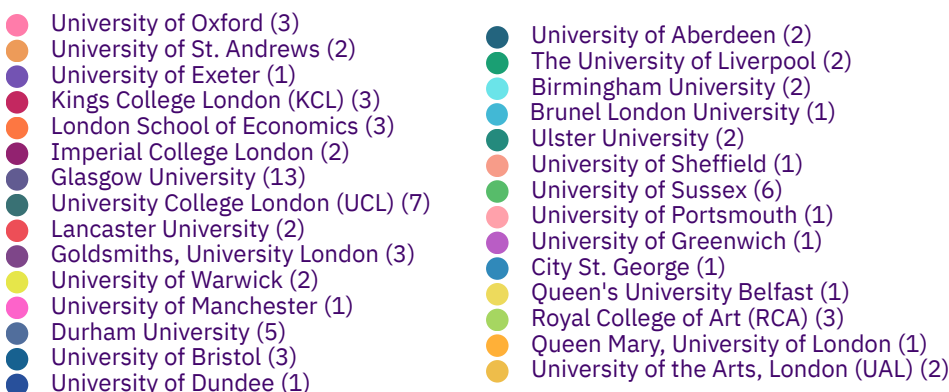


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As a Gazan, I never imagined I would one day study at one of the top universities in the world — the leading institution for Public Health globally. Life in Gaza has always been a struggle, whether in terms of daily living, education, or even basic connectivity. But the moment I connected with Phoenix Space, everything began to change. They supported me in securing my offer, provided the necessary funding, and even guided me through the visa application process. They were with me step by step — all the way until I arrived in the UK and began my studies. Even now, their support continues, both financially and emotionally, in different and meaningful ways. Without their incredible help, I wouldn't be here today, pursuing my dream.

Soad, Public Health, Imperial College London

University In Which Students' Are Attending



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Our Partners

The Gaza Student Emergency Relief Fund has been delivered in collaboration with a diverse and committed network of partners, including: Islamic Relief UK, UK Islamic Mission, Palestinian Mission to the UK, Al Qattan Trust, Bseisu Foundation, University of Sanctuary Initiative, GSI, Scholarships for Ghazza Initiative, Education Beyond Borders, National Zakat Foundation, Aziz Foundation, Co-op, MSF, Norton Rose Fulbright, Zeytoon, Gaza Education Gateway, Gaza40, READ, Reallyenglish, Prospero World, and many others whose contributions have been instrumental to the success of these initiatives.

Phoenix Space has also established formal partnerships with many leading UK universities, including but not limited to UCL, King's College London, the University of Edinburgh, and Imperial College London. These partnerships ensure streamlined Gift Aid arrangements, tuition coverage, and full UKVI compliance.

During the UK Gaza evacuation effort, while UK universities provided individual support to admitted students, Phoenix Space acted as the sole organisation in the UK centralising the support for More than **100** evacuated Gazans students, acting as the indispensable focal point to ensure students have all facets of foundational support. Phoenix Space's unique value lies in the ability to mobilise rapidly, work holistically across academic, legal, financial, and psychosocial domains, and bridge all stakeholders - universities, corporates, legal partners, and NGOs - into a single, coherent support system. This coordination ensures timely, consistent interventions and prevents any student from falling through critical gaps, positioning Phoenix Space as the organisation best equipped to deliver successful outcomes in this complex context.

From everyone at Phoenix Space extend our deepest gratitude to all of our partners, supporters, and collaborators who believe in this mission and have made these initiatives possible. Together, we are not only protecting access to education, we are restoring dignity, stability, and the possibility of a future once thought out of reach.

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It has been a tremendous journey in learning and understanding the challenges students face in conflict zones. Working with Phoenix Space has been an amazing experience and made it viable to find solutions and opportunities for students from Gaza...

**Director of Admissions, Downing College
Cambridge at University of Cambridge**

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Islamic Relief is pleased to support this project for young Palestinian students. This is the first step for these students as they rebuild their futures. After more than two years of disruption to their education, this is an exciting opportunity that these scholars will now be embarking on. We pray that their futures are prosperous and safe.

Zia Salik, UK Director, Islamic Relief UK

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UK Islamic Mission are proud to sponsor these young Palestinian students, for us they are an inspiration. We wish them well in achieving their dreams and pray they become successful and ambassadors after the difficult period of education they have gone through.

**Maqsood Anwar, Head of Relief (UKIM
Trustee)**

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Phoenix Space's support has created opportunities for six postgraduate Master's students from areas of conflict to pursue a world class education at UCL. This support will not only change lives but will also help shape the world we live in. We are proud to work with the Phoenix Space team and look forward to what the future holds for our partnership.

Ian Wilson, Executive Director of Development, UCL

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