



News Release

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Edinburgh strengthens North American ties with New York base

The University of Edinburgh is intensifying its long-standing links with North America by opening a new liaison office in New York City today (22 October).

The new base will aid collaboration between the University and its partners in education, business and government across Canada and the US. It will also provide a point of contact for prospective students and help strengthen ties with the more than 20,000 Edinburgh alumni in North America.

Established in 1583, Edinburgh is one of the UK's oldest universities and is regularly ranked among the world's leading universities. It is the most popular destination for UK-bound American students and is one of the top choices for Canadians choosing to study in the UK.

The University has long-standing links with North America. Universities across Canada and the US were established and influenced by those with an Edinburgh education.

So great was their impact that one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, Benjamin Franklin, declared: "The University of Edinburgh possessed a set of truly great men, professors of several branches of knowledge, as have ever appeared in any age or country."

To mark the opening of the new office, the University is to fund two new scholarships to support outstanding students from North America. The John Witherspoon Masters Scholarships – each worth up to \$35,000 – will be available for students to study a postgraduate Masters degree in any field for the 2015-2016 academic year.

The scholarships are named in honour of one of the University's most distinguished graduates. John Witherspoon transformed what would become Princeton University into a powerhouse of American learning, and was one of two Edinburgh graduates who signed the US Declaration of Independence.

Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, said: "North America is of immense importance to the University and I believe the opening of this new office will extend and deepen the already strong links we have across the USA and Canada.

“North American students make a vital contribution to life at Edinburgh and our research collaborations are helping mankind to address global challenges such as climate change, health and economic development. The North America Office will help further with this important work.”

The University is hosting a series of events in New York City to coincide with the launch. These include a review of Scotland’s political landscape in the aftermath of the recent independence referendum, which saw Scots voting in favour of remaining part of the UK.

Other events include a demonstration, by Professor Harald Haas, of a new high-speed wireless technology called Li-Fi. The technology, developed by Professor Haas, uses light to send information securely and at far greater speed than traditional wi-fi.

The need to improve healthcare provision in developing countries, and to address environmental challenges, will be the subject of a one-day conference, involving the Clinton Foundation, the United Nations, Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson and academic partner institutions.

The distinguished historian Professor Sir Tom Devine will deliver a talk examining the links between the University of Edinburgh and North America, entitled *Enemy or Friend? The Scottish factor in the origins of the USA*.

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