

[ English-Speaking Union. (Accessed Jul. 20, 2023). Overview. Wikipedia. NOTE: This biography omits inexplicably that former U.S. President Howard Taft was appointed the first president of ESU in May 1920, a "sister organization" to the British Pilgrims Society founded in 1902 to give an opportunity for the masses to participate in in the Pilgrims' plan to ANN-X America back into the imperial corporatist British -mpire from their lofty elitist perch in the City of London. ]

# English-Speaking Union

The **English-Speaking Union** (**ESU**) is an international educational membership organisation. Founded by the journalist Sir Evelyn Wrench in 1918, it aims to bring together and empower people of different languages and cultures, by building skills and confidence in communication, such that individuals realise their potential.<sup>[1]</sup> With 35 branches in the United Kingdom and over 50 international ESUs in countries around the world, the ESU carries out a variety of activities such as debating, public speaking and student exchange programmes, runs conferences and seminars, and offers scholarships, to encourage the effective use of the English language around the globe.

The aims of the English-Speaking Union (as stated on its website) are:

1. The mutual advancement of education of the English-speaking world, respecting the traditions and heritage of those with whom we work whilst acknowledging the current events and issues that affect them.
2. The use of English as a shared language and means of international communication of knowledge and understanding, provided always that these are at all times pursued in a non-political and non-sectarian manner.

These aims are taken from the ESU's Royal Charter.

## Governance

The ESU was established in 1918 through the efforts of Sir Evelyn Wrench. In 1957 it received a Royal Charter, with Queen Elizabeth II as the royal patron. Princess Anne, The Princess Royal, has been president since 2013, having taken over from her father Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh who served from 1952 to 2012. Headquartered at Dartmouth House, Mayfair, London, its many activities are coordinated by the director-general. The sixteen-member board of governors meets four times a year, and is presided over by the chair.<sup>[2][3]</sup>

### Directors-general

- Sir Frederick Whyte (1938)<sup>[4]</sup>
- Air Chief Marshal Sir Douglas Evill (1947–1949)<sup>[5]</sup>
- Frank Darvall (1949–1957)<sup>[6][7]</sup>
- Air Chief Marshal Sir Francis Fogarty (1957–1964)<sup>[8]</sup>
- Morris Barr (1964–?)<sup>[9]</sup>
- Wynn Hugh-Jones (1973–1977)<sup>[10][11]</sup>

### English-Speaking Union



The English-Speaking Union

<b>Abbreviation</b>	ESU
<b>Formation</b>	1918
<b>Type</b>	Educational charity
<b>Headquarters</b>	<u>Dartmouth House</u>
<b>Location</b>	London
<b>Region served</b>	International
<b>Official language</b>	English
<b>Chairman</b>	<u>Miles Young</u>
<b>Website</b>	<u>www.esu.org</u> ( <u>http://www.esu.org/</u> )

- Major-General David Crichton Alexander (1977–1979)<sup>[12]</sup>
- Alan Lee Williams (1979–1986)<sup>[13]</sup>
- Richard Heaslip (1987–1989)
- David Hicks (1989–1991)
- David Thorp (1991–1994)
- Valerie Mitchell (1994–2009)
- Mike Lake (2009–2011)<sup>[14]</sup>
- Peter Kyle (2011–2014 )<sup>[15]</sup>
- Jane Easton (2014-)

## Chairs

- Peter Jennings (2014–2015)
- Paul Boateng, Baron Boateng (2015–2019)
- James Raven (2019-2021)
- Miles Young (2021-2022)
- Philip Maunder (interim) (2022-2023)
- Miles Young (2023-)

## Oracy

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The ESU believes oracy – speaking and listening skills – should be at the centre of the school curriculum, and actively encourages the development of these skills through education and competition.

The ESU's education department runs The ESU Schools Mace, the oldest and largest debating competition for schools in England. Several alumni have gone on to be part of Team England or Team Wales (both funded and managed by the ESU) at the annual World Schools Debating Championships – a two-week tournament whose recent venues include Peru, Cape Town, Turkey and Thailand.

Speech-led competitions include Performing Shakespeare (a national contest for secondary school students), the ESU-Churchill National Public Speaking Competition for Schools and the International Public Speaking Competition, which reaches over one million young people in more than 50 countries every year. National winners meet in London for the final, part of a five-day programme of events including public speaking, debating and performance workshops, and cultural excursions.

Alongside these competitions, the ESU also runs games-led debate and public speaking workshops in schools, guides schools on setting up and maintaining their own debate clubs, and provides a range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for teachers in the fields of speech and debate.

## Secondary School Exchange Programme

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British students, having completed their A-Levels, can spend two or three terms at a private prep school in the United States or Canada during their gap year. In return American students come to British schools. Originally known as the *British and American Schoolboy and Schoolgirl Exchange*, the programme was created in 1928. Former British ESU student exchange scholars include:

- Sir Ian Blair (Harvard-Westlake School) – commissioner of the Metropolitan Police
- Sir John Bond (Cate School 1959) – chairman of HSBC
- Sir Richard Dearlove (Kent School) – director of MI6
- Dawn French (Spence School) – actress and comedian
- Michael Davies (Mercersburg Academy) - television producer/personality
- Chris Hawkins (Tabor Academy) – radio presenter
- KT Tunstall (Kent School) – popular musician
- Quentin Letts (Bellarmine College)<sup>[16]</sup> - writer
- Tim Footman (Appleby College) – writer.

American ESU student exchange scholars include:

- Howard Dean – former Governor of Vermont and U.S. presidential candidate
- Heather J. Sharkey – historian in the Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations at the University of Pennsylvania<sup>[17]</sup>

## **The US–UK Debate Tour Exchange**

Two outstanding British student debaters are chosen each year to tour approximately 30 states over three months. The ESU USA Tour is one of the most prestigious awards in University debating. In return two American debaters visit universities and institutions in the UK. The programme was established in 1922. Alumni of the British team include:

- Rab Butler (1924) – Chancellor of the Exchequer, Foreign Secretary
- Michael Ramsey (1925) -Archbishop of Canterbury
- Hans-Jürgen von Blumenthal (1930) – member of the July 20 Plot to assassinate Hitler
- Michael Foot (1934) – leader of the Labour Party
- Edward Heath (1939) – Prime Minister
- Tony Benn (1947) – Labour cabinet minister
- Robin Day (1949) – broadcaster
- William Rees-Mogg (1951) – editor of *The Times*
- Patrick Mayhew (1953) – Northern Ireland Secretary
- Brian Walden (1958) – broadcaster
- Leon Brittan (1961) – Vice-president of the European Commission
- Michael Howard (1963) – leader of the Conservative Party
- Jonathan Aitken (1964) – Conservative politician and former journalist
- Norman Lamont (1965) – Chancellor of the Exchequer
- Peter Bazalgette (1976) – businessman with interests in the media
- Nicholas Mostyn (1981) – High Court judge
- Ian Duncan (1995) – MEP and UK Government minister
- Lewis Iwu (2010) – Director, Fair Education Alliance

as well as a significant number of MPs, QCs and other notable figures.

## **International ESUs**

The ESU's International Headquarters is located in London, and there are over 50 national ESUs around the world.



The New York headquarters

## Australia

Charles Duguid, Scottish medical practitioner and Aboriginal rights activist, helped to found the Australian branch of the ESU in Adelaide, South Australia, and was chairman from 1932 to 1935.<sup>[18][19][20]</sup>

## Music scholarships

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The ESU offers funding for places at top conservatoires for music students. Alumni include Tasmin Little and Nigel Kennedy, both violinists.

## Lindemann Trust Fellowship

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The Lindemann Trust Fellowships are a prestigious research grant awarded to postdoctoral scientists of "exceptional promise" in the pure and applied physical sciences,<sup>[21]</sup> designed to enable British and Commonwealth citizens resident in the UK to perform research in the USA. They have been administered by the ESU since 1972 and were established as a result of a bequest from Brigadier Charles Lindemann.<sup>[21]</sup> Brigadier Lindemann trained as a physicist with his brother, Lord Cherwell, at the University of Berlin,<sup>[22]</sup> after which he served as scientific advisor of the British Army<sup>[23]</sup> and subsequently at the British Embassy in Washington during the Second World War.<sup>[22]</sup> The Lindemann Fellowships were created as a result of his will, where Brigadier Lindemann directed that his residual estate "be used to assist men and women with outstanding potential to become distinguished scholars or teachers in their chosen field".<sup>[24]</sup>

Fellowships are awarded following a rigorous application process, undertaken by a committee, chaired by Professor James Raven, Deputy Chairman of the ESU, which represents the full range of scientific fields eligible for a fellowship. In 2017 the panel comprised: Professor Dirk Aarts – Christ Church; Professor Paul Beer – Wadham College; Professor Ben Berks – Wadham College; Professor Roger Davies – Christ Church; Dr Martin Grossel – Southampton; Dr Karen Mooney-McAuley – Queens University Belfast; Professor Sir David Read – Royal Society and Professor Mary Rees – Liverpool University.

## See also

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- English-Speaking Union Scotland
- John Smith Memorial Mace
- ESU Schools Mace

## Notes

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- [esu.org/about/](http://esu.org/about/)) 7 March 2011 at the [Wayback Machine](#)
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## External links

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- [ESU official website \(http://www.esu.org/\)](http://www.esu.org/)
  - [ESU Centre for Speech and Debate website \(https://web.archive.org/web/20170424232521/http://britishdebate.com/\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20170424232521/http://britishdebate.com/)
  - *"English-Speaking Union of the Commonwealth, registered charity no. 273136"* (<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regId=273136&subId=0>). Charity Commission for England and Wales.
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## NEWS AND EVENTS

### Fourth of July Messages

NATIONAL NEWS

#### ESU of the United States, Chairman's Message

This year, as the ESU of the United States celebrates its 100th Anniversary, the world is dealing with a global pandemic of unparalleled magnitude, cries against racial injustice are echoing throughout our country and across the nations, and at the same time we remember two seminal events that occurred 75 years ago - the day when American, British and Allied forces combined together in Europe to drive the scourge of Nazism from our planet, and the day when nations of good will met together in San Francisco to sign the declaration that marked the establishment of the United Nations.



Far from being remote acts that adorn the pages of history books, both these events of 75 years ago are central and vital to what we are as an organization and both of them have significance as we face a world that has changed rapidly in six months, and shows no sign of reversal. The ties that bind America to the United Kingdom and to Europe, enshrined in the Atlantic Alliance, Nato and countless associations and affiliations that bring us together, are as necessary today as they ever were. Beware those who would decry or undermine bonds forged in blood in defense of liberty, freedom and tolerance. Our links extend far beyond the shores of Europe and, through our international outreach, the ESU is truly global in its desire for peace and fellowship between all people.

This weekend we celebrate the great national holiday of the United States, Independence Day. Justly proud, justly free and justly independent, the American Colonies set a new direction for the world when they eschewed the traditional norms of feudal governance, and broke new ground. As is often said, America is a 'work in progress' and the Black Lives Matter movement is a stark reminder that inequalities and institutionalized brutality still exist in our society. Our willingness as a nation to confront our inner demons and try, however imperfectly, to make things right is an attitude that is enshrined in America's psyche and which we have shared across the



world. It was written in the steadfast determination of those brave men and women who fought in Normandy, and it gave life to the UN Declaration.

As the ESU of the US celebrates our first century and as America remembers its 244 years as a nation, let us stand together as an organisation proud of our nation and equally proud of our international ESU family. Together, and across the oceans, we can link arms in fellowship and fearlessly face the brave new world that is upon us!

**Ambassador Paul Beresford-Hill, CBE**

Chairman, English Speaking Union of the United States

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## ESU of the Commonwealth, Chairman's Message

My greatest disappointment in current restrictions is the cancellation of the 4th July large party in my Cambridge college to celebrate the landmark centenary of the ESU of the United States. But if the Stars and Stripes cannot fly over Magdalene College with 200 or more glasses raised in your honor, I can at least send a message of warm greetings and heartfelt congratulation.



That we share a common language and common values is ever more important to our ESU mission in this troubled world where knowing how to communicate with civility and understanding is too often at a premium. It's my greatest wish that the ESUs of the US and of the Commonwealth should work ever more closely, revivifying our collaborations and exchanges of views, programs and people. It was during the First World War that Evelyn Wrench conceived the idea of a new organization to promote friendship and co-operation between our countries, a concord vital to the stability of the post-war international order. As we know, with the help of Walter Hines Page, US Ambassador to Britain, Wrench launched the ESU in London in June 1918, and was closely involved in establishing the sister ESU of the United States, with William H. Taft as its first president, in May 1920.

Half a century later, I came to the US for the first time— by an ESU branch-to-branch exchange between New Brunswick, NJ, and Colchester in the UK. Like hundreds of young people before and after, I benefited from the immense warmth and indelible generosity of the American people and an educational experience which transformed my life and stays with me today. By such exchanges – immersions in different cultures which can never be replicated by on-line meetings – and by the extraordinary range of ESU activities and programs to promote speech, debate and greater cultural understanding, we advance the ardent wish of Wrench that 'international relations should not be left to governments alone'. Today, our communities are increasingly and rightly multicultural, and yet are often more polarised. There has never been a greater need to understand different perspectives and opinions within and between our countries and across the world. And in the post-



Covid world inequalities and misunderstandings are likely to increase. We all need to listen to and evaluate other points of view; we need to disagree without being disagreeable. The ESU teaches these skills. The need to develop confident, civil communicators and critical thinkers in our ever-changing world has never been more important. Together we can proudly further this cause: my glass is raised. Congratulations and here's to another and even more successful hundred years....

**Professor James Raven, LittD FBA FSA**

Chairman, English-Speaking Union of the Commonwealth

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Home > Who's Who at the ESU?

# MEET THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE THE ESU WHAT IT IS

Say hello to some of our members, volunteers and alumni, all working hard to champion communication and cross-cultural understanding



## Luise Ketel



Event and Memberships Coordinator for the London branch Luise enjoys volunteering for the ESU as a passionate supporter of oracy and non-profit work

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## Thomas Kirkham



As a former volunteer himself, Thomas, our Senior Branches and Volunteering Officer, knows what makes volunteers tick

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## Tina Cook KC



Barrister Tina has been a member since 1983, when she spent a happy six months in the US on an ESU exchange programme

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## Zain Hussain

Find out more about ESU alumnus and member Zain



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## Madeleine Milne



ESU trustee Madeleine hopes to use her experience and listening skills to help us enhance our membership offering and foster growth

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## Miles Contreras-Brown



SSE alumnus and London branch committee member Miles believes there has never been a better time to get involved with the ESU

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## Kat Lam



Kat is a teacher of English and Media Literacy Lead and Regional Coordinator of the PSC, having participated in the competition herself as a student

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## Stephen Purcell



ESU Trustee and Chair of ESU Wales Stephen currently works as an educational consultant, and is passionate about young people's development

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## Tim Davies

Meet ESU member and volunteer judge Tim Davies



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## Jasmine Sandhar



Debate Academy alumna and frequent volunteer Jasmine spent a year in rural Indiana on the Secondary School Exchange, and believes in the power of young people's voices

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## Richard Humphreys KC



ESU alumnus and Trustee Richard was an exchange student to Indianapolis in 1981, and is an advocate for public speaking and debate

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## Louis Preston



Co-chair of the Young Members' Forum and PSC alumnus Louis enjoys volunteering with the ESU and once appeared on the small screen

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## Sarah Harding

Meet ESU alumna and trustee Sarah Harding



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## Erin Young



PSC alumna and ESU volunteer Erin spent a year in Long Island on the Secondary School Exchange, where she discovered the true value of civil discourse

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## Philip Maunder



Interim Chair of the Board at the ESU and Chair of the Devon & Exeter branch Philip is a staunch supporter of the ESU's mission

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## Ameeta Sabharwal



Ameeta coordinates the ever-popular ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition in Hertfordshire, and believes in the power of cross-cultural understanding

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## Ellie Bristow



Young member Ellie is a PhD student in the Centre for Language and Communication Research at Cardiff University, and Chair of the Young Person's Committee in South Wales

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## Laurence Mutkin



ESU Trustee and an alumnus of the Secondary School Exchange, Laurence has worked for companies including Morgan Stanley and BNP Paribas and owns a surprising collection

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## Simon Kearey



Chair of the Buckinghamshire branch Simon has been a judge for many ESU competitions over the years, and is currently managing COVID vaccination sites in Buckinghamshire

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## Serena Parekh



Co-chair of the Young Members Forum and frequent volunteer Serena has participated in several ESU programmes over the years as both competitor and judge

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## Sarah Hawkins



ESU Trustee and London branch committee member Sarah has worked with charities for over 20 years, and is keen to increase awareness of the ESU's mission

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## Jennifer Grace



Events Coordinator for the Guildford & District branch Jennifer helps run competitions for her branch and believes that we can learn from the younger generations

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## Eleanor Stiles

ESU alumna Eleanor has competed nationally and internationally, and sees the ESU's programmes as invaluable experiences



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## Ismaeel Amin



Ismaeel coordinates the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition in Manchester, and is an advocate for the benefits of oracy in communities

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## Danny Preiskel



ESU Trustee and former ESU scholar Danny now runs a leading City law firm, and speaks seven languages

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## Huw Jones



Young member Huw has participated in several ESU competitions over the years, and commends the supportive environment for young people to develop

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## Laure Chabenat

Meet Laure Chabenat, Ambassador for Youth, ESU France



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## Sophia Taylor



PSC alumna and Guildford & District branch committee member Sophia enjoys volunteering for the ESU, and now works with the Membership and Engagement team

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## Lyn Roseaman



ESU volunteer Lyn is a bestselling author and founder of a public speaking coaching business, and is passionate about empowering young people to find their voices

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Join our community and help give young people the speaking and listening skills and cross-cultural understanding they need to thrive

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## Our mission

The ESU's mission is to give young people the speaking and listening skills and cross-cultural understanding they need to thrive



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## Donate



Your donations help us to ensure that many more young people have the speaking and listening and cross-cultural understanding they need to thrive

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