



2024-2025 Annual Report

Planting Seeds of Kindness

Empowered by Cambridge
School of Bucharest

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Our Mission

Founded in 2023, the Oak & Elm Foundation was established as a natural extension of Cambridge School of Bucharest’s enduring commitment to service, compassion, and community engagement. Rooted in the school’s long-standing tradition of encouraging students to give back, the Foundation serves as a platform to inspire and support meaningful action.

Our mission is to strengthen the culture of kindness within our school community by actively involving students in initiatives that nurture empathy, responsibility, and civic-mindedness. We firmly believe that when young people are empowered with the right tools, guidance, and opportunities, they can grow into thoughtful, engaged citizens—individuals capable of contributing positively to the world around them.

With the unwavering support of CSB’s educators, families, and partners, we have created a diverse range of programmes that encourage students to take part in:

- Volunteer and community service activities
- Fundraising and charitable events
- Environmentally sustainable projects
- Advocacy initiatives and awareness campaigns

Through these efforts, we seek to cultivate a generation of compassionate leaders who are attuned to the social and environmental challenges of our time. By fostering social awareness, empathy, and a deep sense of purpose, the Oak & Elm Foundation empowers young people to leave a lasting, positive mark on their communities and beyond.



Winter Bazaar December 2024



Light into Europe Assembly October 2024



TOGETHER



BRIGHTER
FUTURE



KINDNESS
AND CARE

Reflections from the Executive Director

Dear friends, colleagues, and members of our community,

As I reflect on the journey of the Oak & Elm Foundation during the academic year 2024–2025, I am filled with a profound sense of pride, gratitude, and optimism. This year has been a testament to what young people can achieve when they are given not just the encouragement, but the tools and opportunities to lead with purpose and compassion.

Founded in 2023, the Oak & Elm Foundation emerged from a powerful idea rooted in the values of Cambridge School of Bucharest: that kindness, when nurtured within a community, becomes a catalyst for meaningful change. What began as a vision to extend our school's spirit of volunteerism and civic responsibility has rapidly grown into a vibrant platform for youth-led initiatives, community outreach, and social awareness.

This year, our students have taken part in an inspiring range of projects—from organising fundraising events and leading sustainability drives, to launching advocacy campaigns and directly serving those in need. These efforts have not only touched lives outside our school, but have also transformed the hearts and minds of those within it. Watching our students develop empathy, initiative, and

leadership skills through service has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my role.

None of this would be possible without the tireless support of our teachers, staff, parents, and partners. You have not only believed in our mission, but actively contributed your time, expertise, and resources to help bring it to life. To our donors and collaborators, thank you for trusting in the potential of our youth and helping us build a structure that supports their dreams and ambitions.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to expanding our impact and continuing to grow a culture of social responsibility within and beyond our school walls. We will strive to ensure that each student who takes part in our programmes feels seen, heard, and empowered to make a difference.

On behalf of the Oak & Elm Foundation, thank you for walking this path with us. Together, we are shaping a generation that believes in kindness—not just as a virtue, but as a responsibility.

Warm regards,
Julia Surož
Executive Director
Oak & Elm Foundation



Reflections from the President



“The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can change his life by altering his attitudes.”

William James, philosopher and psychologist

At Oak and Elm, we aim to complement the formal exceptional education provided by Cambridge School of Bucharest with community projects that help students develop practical skills, cultivate empathy, and become better people, without having *“to wait until they grow up to start changing the world,”* as anthropologist Margaret Mead said.

I gladly accepted the invitation from the school’s founders to launch this initiative, alongside Ciprian Ladunca, Julia Suroz, CSB teachers, and passionate specialists. As a mother of an adult child, I feel happy to contribute to creating

learning experiences that inspire children and support them throughout their educational journey.

All of this is possible thanks to you, the parents—we thank you for your trust, to your children, whom we warmly congratulate for all they have achieved, and to the sponsors who support this project!

Adela Jansen
President
Oak & Elm Foundation



Key Message from CSB's Deputy Director



Community has always been the cornerstone of Cambridge School of Bucharest, and our partnership with the Oak & Elm Foundation has enabled our students to real change well beyond our campus. Our students have shown true dedication to this wider community. Recently, we have seen a record number of student volunteers for such events as the Casa Ioana Soup Kitchen, the Literary Fair in Dorobantu with Asociatia Curtea Veche, the series of oil-painting workshops at Nicodata Singur and Casa Sperantei—Hospice, the Together We Learn tutoring programme with EduAct, along with many other student-led initiatives. It has been incredible to see students invested and involved in the world around us.

The key to these dynamic projects has been the support of Oak & Elm. Through the foundation, our students have found ways and resources to make their community-building efforts a reality. Moreover, the relationships that Oak & Elm has established with our trusted NGO partners have provided the necessary reach that students need to make their projects come to life.

Our staff and students look forward to the continued development of this successful partnership with Oak & Elm and the multitude of passion projects it is sure to inspire.

Heath Renfroe
Deputy School Director
Cambridge School of Bucharest



2024–2025 Year in Review: Milestones and Achievements

There has been enormous interest among students to invest their time and efforts in on-campus volunteering. Student volunteer numbers have increased for regular events like the [Winter Bazaar](#), [Summer Fair](#), [World Book Week](#), [Sports Tournaments](#), [AIDUCATION Conference 2024 and 2025](#), [SRT University Fair 2025](#), [CSB Science Fair 2024 and 2025](#), annual [CSB Poppy Appeal](#) with the UK Embassy in Romania, [Royal Garden Party 2024](#), and [Library and Science Lab Assistants](#).

There are a number of student-created initiatives that have encouraged many student volunteers:

- **CSB Model United Nations**

CSB students have successfully organised two on-campus MUN events which were open to area schools. Students are currently working on the third edition set for this coming autumn.

- **CSB Science Fair:**

This internal, student-led initiative brings Secondary science students into Key Stage 2 classrooms to work on projects for the fair, which is attended by parents and other community members. It has been held for two years and continues to grow.

- **Global Money Week:**

Volunteer from Year 12 economics co-led Global Money Week 2025,

designing and delivering lessons, form-time activities, and assemblies from KS1 to KS5.

- **Financial Literacy Teaching:**

For the second year, Key Stage 4 and 5 students have taught our homegrown, student-designed Secondary Financial Literacy curriculum during our Key Stage 3 PSCH EE lessons.

- **Year 5 Reading Programme:**

Year 12 students run interventions with Year 5 students several times a week before school. Student volunteers work with Primary leadership on content and delivery. So far, volunteers have read books and worked on plays with their tutees.



University Fair September 2024

Our NGO Partners

CSB has developed long-term, trusted partnerships with a variety of local NGOs. Our partnerships include: **Casa Buna** (focusing on drug abuse in Bucharest); **Casa Sperantei Hospice** (providing end-of-life care in Romania); **Ateliere Fara Frontiere** (working on sustainability and recycling initiatives); **EduAct** (providing support to local impoverished state school systems); **Asociatia Curtea Veche** (promoting literacy throughout Romania); **International Women's Association** (championing diversity and inclusion); **Casa Ioana** (combating homelessness and supporting victims of domestic abuse); **Light into Europe** (supporting the blind with guide dogs and training); the **Romanian Diversity Chamber of Commerce** (working with marginalised groups through community outreach); **MARe Museum** (a local museum specialising in modern Romanian art), and **Niciodata Singur** (combatting loneliness among the elderly).

In September of 2024, we held our first annual **CSB Charity Fair**, and event that hosted nine of the above NGOs to campus. The participating NGOs were able to meet directly with students to present their area of focus and encourage student participation. The event was for our Sixth Form, and ninety students signed up with at least one NGO.

Stemming from the success of the CSB Charity Fair, in 2025 CSB students

have participated in a host of outside-of-school volunteer opportunities: thirty students volunteered for the **AccessABILITY Expo** hosted by the Romanian Diversity Chamber of Commerce, over forty students worked the Casa Ioana Christmas Soup Kitchen, over twenty students served as docents for the opening two days of MARe Museum's exhibition **All Our Todays**, eight Year 10 students volunteered at the **Narativ Literacy Festival** held by **Asociatia Curtea Veche**, and additional students volunteered at the **Casa Sperantei—Hospice Marathon**, the **International Women's Association Christmas Bazaar**, the **Ateliere Fara Fronteriere Harvest Day**, among others.

Alongside our community involvement, CSB has positioned itself as a hub for professional learning through the **AIDUCATION Conference**, now in its second year. This event serves as high-impact CPD for our own staff and

for educators from schools across Romania and internationally. It focusses on the use of AI in education, featuring expert speakers and classroom practitioners who are innovating in the field. In February 2025, the conference included 24 different workshops and three keynote addresses, with guest speakers flown in to share research, tools, and practical strategies for integrating technology in teaching.

Attendees have included teachers from across the COBIS network, international schools, and local state schools, with complimentary places provided to ensure equitable access. CSB students have supported the event each year, taking on roles such as guiding guests, assisting with logistics and facilitating sessions. This year, they took a more active role by participating in workshops themselves, engaging with cutting-edge educational discussions and demonstrating leadership, curiosity, and confidence.

Connections to our local community have also provided students with opportunities for leadership and responsibility. Key Stage 5 students have shown great enthusiasm for their charitable initiatives and newly created roles such as our Student Charity Organiser have endowed students with greater voice within the school and higher levels of ownership.



Examples of student-led projects are:

Casa Ioana Harvest Drive

In October of every academic year, our entire community donates dry goods to Casa Ioana in support of their women's shelter and soup kitchen. The CSB Student Charity Organiser promoted the drive to our school community and helped organise donations.



Casa Ioana Year 12 Gift Exchange

Each Christmas, Year 12 organise a student gift appeal with the women and children of Casa Ioana's shelter. They group themselves together and purchase gifts for the children there, and, this year, our Travel & Tourism students used the funds raised from their projects to purchase books and games for the house, as well as special gift bags for the mothers there. Finally, all student organisers delivered the gifts to Casa Ioana, complete with a student dressed as Santa.



Dorobantu Literacy Fair

Through her IB CAS project and in partnership with EduAct and Asociatia Curtea Veche, one Year 12 student has organised a series of literacy events in support of Dorobantu Primary School, a local state school in an impoverished area. The student organised the funding necessary to donate books to the school and provide to CSB visits. One took place in December when eleven A-Level and IB students visited the school to read with students there.



The second event took place in May of 2025 and included a larger book donation, professional literacy experts, guest authors, and over twenty CSB volunteers.



Dorobantu Science Fair

This is a student-led, two-year project run by the same student who organises the CSB Science Fair. She has begun fundraising for the project at this year's CSB Science Fair, which will fund a similar event at Dorobantu Primary School in the autumn of 2025. Key Stage 5 science students will run experiments for the Primary students there with the aim of promoting a love of learning and science.

Together We Learn

This project is led by another of our Year 12 IB students in partnership with EduAct. Following the success of our work with the Dorobantu Primary School, she has organised an online tutoring programme which pairs Dorobantu Primary students with eighteen Year 10 CSB students. Every Friday after school, CSB students meet with their partners to practise maths and Romanian for an hour. Students on both sides of this programme have greatly profited from the experience.



Together We Learn Spring 2025

Hospice Casa Sperantei

The Edelweiss Ball – the most important fundraising event of the year organized by HOSPICE Casa Speranței, now in its 25th edition – took place on Thursday, 12 June 2025, at The Tent (Diplomatic Club), bringing together philanthropists, corporate partners, artists, and supporters united by a common mission: to bring comfort and dignity to children living with incurable illnesses.

Staying true to the event's cherished

tradition, the evening blended culture, compassion, and purpose in a refined setting. Guests enjoyed inspiring artistic performances, meaningful conversations, and a spirited charity auction – all in support of pediatric palliative care.

We are proud to share that the Oak and Elm members represented the foundation at the event, standing in solidarity with HOSPICE Casa Speranței's life-changing mission. As part of our

commitment, we are honored to have contributed to the cause by purchasing a hospital bed for the children, valued at €50,000. This essential piece of equipment will offer not only physical comfort but also a sense of dignity and relief to the young patients who will receive care at the new facility.

Our involvement reflects our belief that every child deserves quality care, compassion, and hope – no matter the diagnosis.



Hospice Casa Sperantei Edelweiss Ball June 2025. Oak & Elm Board Members: Joseph Khoury, Adela Jansen, Julia Suroz, and Ciprian Ladunca.



Touring Art Workshops

This project brings Key Stage 5 art students together to lead oil-painting workshops at various charities in Bucharest. So far, students have held these workshops at Casa Sperantei Hospice and Niciodata Singur, with more to be held in May 2025. So far, ten CSB students have volunteered for this initiative.



Eco-Committee Initiatives

For the second year, the Student Eco-Committee has organised an electronic waste collection House competition in partnership with Ateliere Fara Frontiere. This week-long collection raised 1.6 metric tons of electronic waste, which has been recycled by AFF. To date, over three metric tons of waste have been collected through this student initiative. Every March, our Student Eco-Committee organise a Community Litter Pick in nearby Baneasa Forest. This a community favourite and brings students and their families together to better our local environment.

Last year, the Eco-Committee made a successful proposal to install solar panels on the roof of Oak Building, which now provide clean, renewable energy for the school. This initiative was created by our current Head Girl.



CONCORDIA Academia has been supporting Oak & Elm's organisational development process since the beginning of 2025. We have delivered tailored training sessions integrated with mentoring and coaching methodologies. This comprehensive process addressed key aspects such as organisational structure, operational functions, and strategic growth.

We are honoured to support the mission and ambitious objectives of Oak & Elm, as it makes a truly significant contribution to advancing fundamental values such as social responsibility, respect, humanitarianism, and civic engagement.

Our Projects at a Glance

Number	Name of Event	Dates	Project Leads	Year Groups
1	CSB Charity Fair	20.09.2024	Heath Renfroe	12 & 13
2	AccessABILITY Expo	27-29.09.2024	Sofia Berechet	12 & 13
3	AFF Harvest Day	05.10.2024	Barbara Drevon	12 & 13
4	CAS Art Workshop (1 & 2)	21-22. 11.2024	Diana Valeanu	12 & 13
5	Dorobantu Literacy Workshop (1)	09.12.2024	Maria Oancea	12 & 13
6	IWA Christmas Bazaar	08.12.2024	Cristina Lazar	12 & 13
7	Casa Ioana Soup Kitchen	11.12.2024	Heath Renfroe	12 & 13
8	Year 12 Gifts to Casa Ioana	19.12.2024	Heath Renfroe	12
9	MARe Museum A Night at the Museum	11.02.2025	Heath Renfroe	11, 12, & 13
10	MARe Museum All Our Todays Grand Opening	12.02.2025	Heath Renfroe	11, 12, & 13
11	CAS Art Workshop (3)	13.03.2025	Diana Valeanu	12 & 13
12	Together We Learn	Term 3	Daria Ghiba	10
13	Narativ Festival	29.03.2025	Heath Renfroe	10
14	Dorobantu Literacy Workshop (2)	19.05.2025	Maria Oancea	10 & 12
15	CAS Art Workshop (4)	23.05.2025	Diana Valeanu	12

Number of Students	NGO Partners
90	IWA, Casa Ioana, Casa Buna, AFF, EduAct, Light into Europe, Casa Sperantei, ACV
33	Diversity Chamber of Commerce
1	Ateliere Fara Frontiere
5	HOSPICE--Casa Sperantei
11	Eduact & Asociatia Curtea Veche
6	International Women's Association
41	Casa Ioana
7	Casa Ioana
21	MARe Museum
11	MARe Museum
6	Niciodata Singur
18	EduAct
8	Asociatia Curtea Veche
18	EduAct & Asociatia Curtea Veche
7	Niciodata Singur



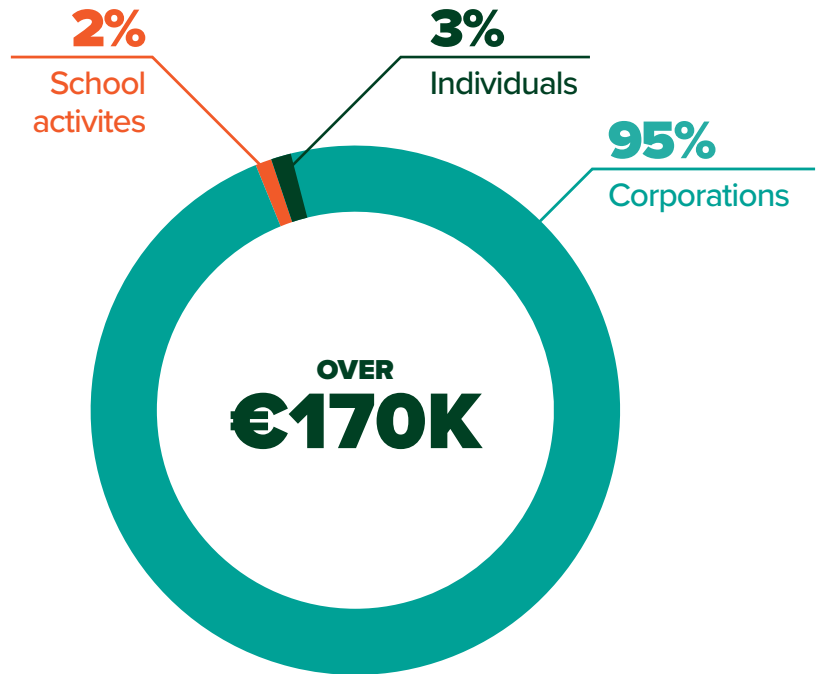
EDUCATIONAL



SOCIAL & CULTURAL

2024–2025 Financial Overview

For the academic year 2024–2025, the Oak & Elm Foundation maintained a strong financial standing, thanks to the generous contributions of individuals, corporate partners, and school-led initiatives. This support has allowed us to continue funding impactful programmes and expanding our reach in the community.



SOURCES OF FUNDS (FUNDRAISING)

The Foundation raised a total of €170,075, sourced from the following channels:

- Corporate donations formed the largest share, contributing €161,563, reflecting the strong partnerships we've built with mission-aligned businesses.

- Individual donors—students, parents, staff, and community members—contributed a significant €5,270.
- School-based activities such as fairs, themed days, and donation drives brought in an additional €3,243.

These combined efforts demonstrate the collective spirit and commitment of the wider Cambridge School of Bucharest community.

USES OF FUNDS

Our approach remains rooted in transparency and responsible financial stewardship. Out of the total funds raised:

- €8,052 was directed toward sponsorships, which include donations to our partner NGOs, support for student-led service projects, and funding for materials and logistics.

- €2,684 covered operational costs, ensuring the smooth administration of events, communication, and coordination activities essential to our foundation's success.
- €50,000 covered the purchase of a children's hospital bed for Hospice Casa Sperantei.

- €3,850 in donated goods to various NGOs and projects.

This brings total expenditures to €60,736, meaning the Foundation continues to operate with a strong fiscal reserve, positioning us well for upcoming projects in 2025–2026.

By the Numbers

12
TRUSTED
NGO PARTNERS

7
STUDENT-LED
PROJECTS

90
KS 5 STUDENT SIGN-UPS
AT THE CSB CHARITY FAIR

193
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
FOR CSB STUDENTS

OVER
1,700
TOTAL HOURS
OF VOLUNTEERING

15
OFF-CAMPUS
VOLUNTEER EVENTS

OVER
€170,000
TOTAL FUNDS
RAISED

Countless
LIVES TOUCHED

OVER
5,270
CONTRIBUTORS
TO OAK & ELM

Independent Schools Inspectorate recently delivered its report from its **May 2025 BSO** inspection of **Cambridge School of Bucharest**. While we are so pleased to celebrate the hard work of Oak & Elm and CSB students, let's hear what British Overseas Schools experts have to say about the efforts of our team:

"Pupils learn the value of difference and understand the importance of treating others with fairness and kindness."

"Pupils contribute meaningfully to the life of the school and the broader community."

"Pupils in the sixth form support the leadership of recreational clubs and provide online tutoring to disadvantaged pupils. Volunteering and community service are integrated into the curriculum of older pupils."

"Pupils understand the importance of social responsibility and show empathy in their interactions. Staff ensure these opportunities are purposeful and include all who wish to participate, encouraging all pupils to engage in service."

Our NGO Partners



FUNDAȚIA COLECȚIA REGALĂ



Casa
Bună



asociația
curtea veche

concordia
ACADEMIA



HOSPICE
Casa
Speranței

30 DE ANI



TAX DONATION INSTRUCTIONS

Companies (Legal Entities) may sponsor Oak and Elm by directing **20% of their profit tax**. To do so, the company must complete and submit **Form 177** to the **state authorities between January and May** of the following year (for the previous fiscal year).

Individuals (Natural Persons) may direct **3.5% of their income tax** to Oak and Elm by completing **Form 230** and submitting it to us between **January and April** of the following year (for the previous fiscal year).

Thank you for your generosity.

HOW TO REACH US

For donations, projects or support, you may reach us:

communications@OakAndElm.ro

+40 21 210 2131/38

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