**1. What is the benefit of becoming a GOI-IES Scholar, to yourself (personally and professionally), to Ireland, and to your country of origin? (15 marks) MAX 500 WORDS \***

As an individual who loves to study and do research, whose passion for learning hasn't dissipated with time, and who loves to travel and explore, becoming a GOI-IES Scholar at TU Dublin is a dream come true. As a citizen and resident of a developing African country, the current exchange rate makes it nearly impossible for me to finance the program, even with the help of family. A GOI-IES Scholarship will greatly alleviate this cross and allow me fully devote my time, presence of mind and mental bandwidth to my studies and to other things that matter, thereby bringing out the best in me holistically and help me meet expectations to the glory of TU Dublin, Ireland and Nigeria.

I am deeply interested in how technology can enhance the different sectors for economic growth, especially how software can solve real world problems and make life better for most, especially back at home. This is the philanthropic drive and mantra behind my career choice and the object of its passion. Regrettably, Nigeria doesn’t yet have the educational resources to meet this professional challenge, forcing me to look outside of its shores. TU Dublin is a school that connects education and industry. With the academic excellence of a traditional university, strategic industrial partnerships, state-of-the-art facilities and a continuously evolving curriculum, they fit the best of both worlds into their education model and there's no better oven for a technology professional to be baked in so as to become industry-ready and impactful in the emerging digital economy.

**“*No one asks the cook if he/she has eaten”*** is a saying back home, which simply means it is implied that the cook has taken his/her share first before dishing out the meal. After passing through the oven of TU Dublin’s industry-focused rugged academic regimen and coming out properly baked, surely Ireland should be the first to have a taste, yes? During the course of my studies and afterwards I am ready and willing to serve and give back to Ireland in whatever capacity I am capable of and may be required of me before returning back to my home country. This is only right and just. Apart from improved diplomatic relations with Ireland, Nigeria will welcome back and inject an excellent product into its adolescent IT sector and work force to help nourish and grow it in an individual capacity through gainful employment or by building start-ups, thus boosting the economy and contributing immensely to nation building. What more could a nation ask for?

**2. As a GOI-IES Scholar, how will you extend yourself beyond your project/studies to become actively involved in Irish society in order to maximize your academic / cultural exchange experience and raise awareness of the GOI-IES scheme in Ireland and beyond? (15 marks) MAX 500 WORDS \***

The cultural/academic exchange experience is something I greatly look forward to. As someone who loves nature, travelling and exploration, the prospect of visiting Ireland and immersing myself in its people, culture, tradition, geography, history, activities, cuisines and drinks is extremely exhilarating. I have read and heard likewise that the Republic of Ireland is a beautiful country with historic landmarks, peaceful, youthful and forward-thinking with even more beautiful, intelligent and progressive people. The Cliffs of Moher on the Atlantic coast, the Dingle peninsula at Kerry, Newgrange at Meath, and Bundoran beach at Donegal speak volumes for themselves and are just few of the breath-taking landscapes and beauty spots scattered around Ireland that give it its elemental and remote appeal.

Born and raised Catholic by strict and staunch Roman-Catholic parents, and remaining Catholic by choice, I very much plan to be actively involved in the Irish Catholic Community in whatever capacity that may be lacking and required and that I may be capable of. This is implicit and is to be expected since Ireland is a predominantly Catholic country (78.3% as at 2016) and “*the harvest is ready but the labourers are few*”. During my undergraduate days, for 2 years (2018 – 2020) I worked extensively with the Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus (HHCJ), SEP, which is a Catholic Religious female order headquartered in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. Their apostolate is predominantly focused on women and the girl child. I worked with them particularly in my capacity as an IT Technician but I also assisted in other duties. *“Humanity before Religion”* is a common saying of the Reverend Sisters, which simply means that your service should first be to your fellow man and his edification before the church. In the light of this I also intend to volunteer in any open, legitimate, progressive and civic activity that may arise outside the church, as part of my social responsibility, my effort to contribute to Ireland’s nation building and to be part of a bonding experience.

*“All work and no play…”* they say makes Jack a dull boy. As a GOI-IES Scholar, my academics is top priority, which is why maintaining a healthy work-life balance for peak, sustainable and all-round performance isn’t only necessary but vital. Music and dance is a big part of the Irish culture. Home to one of my favourite, greatest and oldest rock band the world has ever known, U2, and of course the ubiquitous premium stout, Guinness, Ireland offers you a social life that is inimitable elsewhere and trust me, you won’t find me at home on Friday nights. Social Education is very much part of my academic/cultural exchange experience and I welcome every opportunity, social or academic, to interact with fellow scholars, Irish or not, and Irish folks, students or not, from all corners of the globe and share life experiences and extend awareness of the GOI-IES scheme because frankly it’s not my intention to be part of any problem in Ireland but part of a solution.

**3. Explain the extent to which you have a long-term interest in Ireland and how will you promote links with Ireland during your time as a GOI-IES Scholar and following your studies, as GOI-IES Alumni? (15 marks) MAX 500 WORDS \***

Nobody is averse to an environment that supports, encourages, rewards and facilitates sustainable professional (and personal) growth and development, especially when the relationship between the given and the giver are symbiotic. Ireland has proven to be a sought-after location because of its pro-business approach, a thriving ICT sector and a very highly skilled work force. This puts it at the forefront of digital transformation and it has become the global technology hub of choice when it comes to attracting the strategic business activities of ICT companies (e.g. Red Hat, SE2, Krypt and Qualcomm) and best talents from around the world. The country has a rich ecosystem of high calibre, innovative indigenous companies, particularly in the software space, which have a growing global representation, and an ICT-friendly government under the aegis of IDA Ireland whose main objective is to encourage foreign direct investment (FDI) into Ireland by foreign-owned companies. This has earned Ireland the reputation of being the heart of ICT in Europe. Little wonder Forbes Magazine described it as “*One of the best countries for business”.*

As I previously mentioned above, in appreciation for the exceptional education (Formal and Informal) I will receive as a prospective GOI-IES Scholar, I very much intend to contribute to Ireland’s nation building for as long as is needed, by giving back to Ireland *a good slice of the bread just fresh out the oven*, by making myself available for work after graduation in its thriving ICT sphere, thereby increasing the country’s highly skilled work force and talent pool, which is readily available to local firms and will also attract foreign ICT companies into the country, increase FDI and further strengthen the Irish economy.