



INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP FORUM(ISF)

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Transcript of Lecture [ISF Forum 6]: Securing Admission and Scholarships in the Netherlands: Orange Knowledge Programme (OKP) in Perspective

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Lecture Agenda

1. Why the Netherlands
2. Overview of the Orange Knowledge Programme (OKP) Scholarship
 - *Origins
 - *Benefits
3. Recent statistics
4. How to apply
 - *Essay writing
 - *Securing an admission
 - *Securing the scholarship
5. Questions and answers

Now the Lecturer

First of all, I would like to thank the Admin of the International Scholarship Forum for giving me the avenue. You are deeply appreciated. Without further ado, let's get started.

Why the Netherlands?

Honestly, it's pretty simple.

Education

Holland has one of the highest numbers of international students, as all universities offer study programs that are taught in English. The degree received from these universities is internationally recognized, which is so helpful for when you look for a job, even outside of Holland.

Most Dutch Universities of Applied Sciences have a practical approach where you learn how to apply the theory learned in class to real-life situations. They also give you opportunities to work in companies, in order to get work experience. The teacher-student relationship is informal, so there is an interactive teaching environment.

Secondly,

Diversity

The international atmosphere makes you feel right at home! Without a doubt, you would find people from your home country, but you also encounter a variety of cultures. Meeting different people is a way to build a network, work on your communication skills and learn about different ethnicities, so it's very useful for when you work in companies. It's also an advantage to make friends from different parts of the world, so you can go visit their hometown if you want.

Let's keep short,

Nearly everyone speaks English

Although the official language is Dutch, almost 95% of the population speaks English. Therefore, not knowing Dutch isn't an issue! There isn't a language barrier, and this makes life so much more comfortable for those coming from another country. As nervous as you might be, the people in Holland welcome all internationals and you can easily have interesting conversations with the locals. So, in general Education and Life in Netherlands is pretty easy to be honest.

Quickly, let's get to the Subject of Discussion.

The Orange Knowledge Scholarship (OKP)

Overview of OKP

The objective of the Orange Knowledge Programme is to contribute to a society's sustainable and inclusive development. We aim to do this by strengthening the skills and knowledge of both individuals, groups of individuals and organisations.

On 1 July 2017 the Netherlands Fellowship Programmes (NFP) entered a new phase as a new programme under the name Kennisontwikkelings programma (KOP), in English, Orange Knowledge Programme (OKP). OKP aims to advance the development of the capacity, knowledge and quality of both individuals and institutions in higher and vocational education. The sweetest part of this scholarship programme is that it is FULLY FUNDED.

Let's keep it simple, OKP is a scholarship for every Nigerian and citizens of most parts of Africa. Please do well to check the country list, as I am aware of the inclusion of International Scholars.

<https://www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/orange-knowledge-programme/orange-knowledge-programme-overview>

Please click on the link to check if you are eligible country wise.

... And as per programmes, OKP currently covers 1818 programmes. Please check for yours, I'm sure you'd be in luck. Click on the link below:

<https://www.studyinholland.nl/studies>

Recent Statistics

OKP Scholarship has produced over 14,000 scholars since its inception.

Interestingly, OKP and most African countries are like besties. Yes, they love us. Statistically speaking, in the just concluded Round (Round 1) of openings for OKP

A total of 379 scholarships were awarded for Masters Degree, while a total of 510 scholarships were awarded for short courses. I did my analyses on these numbers, I discovered 69% of the awards was won by Africans (263 awardees) for Masters while 67% (345 awardees) of the awards was won for short courses.

Honestly, its not about the love they have for us but the quality of our applications, Africans and Nigerians are really stepping up, as Nigeria had the highest number of winners for Masters degree scholarships. Ethiopia had the highest overall when short courses are included.

How do I apply?

Let me break it to you, no sugar coats

The application is a bit complex, just like every other application most of us have done for other schools and scholarships.

In this case, Admission and Scholarship applications are separate.

Firstly, you have to secure an admission, afterwards the School would nominate you (this is not an assurance, your essay has to be on point and mind blowing in all ramifications before you can be nominated).

Then the school would send you a link to which you can apply separately, as OKP Scholarship Administration is being handled by NUFFIC these are the ones that would consider giving you a scholarship, the job of the school is to nominate and that's all.

Scholarship application process

You will write essay ooo

Applying for admission to the School is just like some others, some schools have separate application portals handled by an organisation, for example Studie Link

During the Application for Admission

Please note- When writing your essay (Motivation letter, Statement of Purpose etc) for Admission and Scholarship, try to let your essay center around one or more of these Themes.

- * Food and nutrition security
- *Water, energy and climate
- *Sexual and reproductive health and rights
- *Security and the rule of law

These themes can change, do well to carry out a little research before writing anything

...if not, don't even think about winning because they would consider your admission essay along with other essays I will mention below.

After securing an admission, you'll get nominated by the school (hopefully)

For the scholarship, there is a clause... Be calm

- **You need to be Employed**

I'm betting your mind is telling you to give up on the opportunity as you are not currently employed. Just look at the bigger picture, at this stage of our lives we all have had the opportunity to work in one company or any kind work. A lot of your former employers can be willing to help, you won't know if you don't ask.

So, ask

Seek for help.

- **Have the necessary documents** - I'm sure in this group, the admins would have been talking about a list of documents, those ones you need to apply for admission and scholarships... I'm sure right now you remember. Here is a short guide to what you would meet during the application. Think of it as a head start. There are separate essays that you would need to get ready.

- **Employers Statement** this is where you have your application in the hands of your employer (do well to be of good behaviour, NUFFIC would provide a format usually a word document where your Employer would write a few words about you and the company (the questions vary), you can't be sure of the question.
- **Government statement**, usually Nigerians are excluded from this list. For International scholars, once you get nominated, please ensure you find out if you are required to get this statement. It's an already filled document that just needs a bit of information from Government Authority
- Lastly, **Country Focus** this is similar to the themes I mentioned earlier, once you get nominated the country focus list would be sent to you. Country Focus is more like a guide so as to narrow down your essays and not waste your words.

Here is the easy part.. the winning part

How do you win?

First of all, there are no easy ways to winning this scholarship just like every other scholarship.

- 1) Like I said earlier your application essays should be centered around those themes. I'm begging you
- 2) Your essays have to be competitive- Please never get tired of writing Motivation Letters, Personal Statements and SOPs... Constantly send them for reviews or assessments.
- 3) Mentorship- Mentors are the ones who help you in reviewing your essays and all. Please take time to have mentors especially ones in your field of study.
- 4) Link up- Connect with people that are also applying for the same scholarship and same school (maybe). So that relevant information won't pass you by.
- 5) Beg your Employer if there is the need - Most times, Employers won't have time to write essays for their employees. They would rather ask you to write it and bring it back to them so that they can read before including their signature and stamp. If your Employer sees something he is not comfortable with, he might ask you to remove it. The particular clause that he wants you to remove might be vital to your application. Beg He/She for the help you need and try to make them see reason.
- 6) Be smart- Every OKP Scholar was smart during the application process. When encountered with a problem, you would have to toughen up and think smart to get out of the problem. This might occur when your mentor is not available and cards aren't playing in your favour during the application process.

Finally, PRAY HARD even when you are confident about winning

Phewww.... I've said everything in my mind ooo. Please shoot me with your questions

Thank you for the wonderful insight, scholar

Questions & Answers

Q: Sir, about applying for the admission. Is there any fee for the application?	A: Not really, most schools in the Netherlands never ask for application fees Really, it depends on the school, they are just a few, I'm sure If the school you like is doing anyhow by asking for the application fee. find the next best alternative school. Just saying. But application fees are rare.
Q: Please does the employer have to be current or last employer can do?	A: Any employer that is willing to help, but be smart the employer that is going to help you out should be your current employer in document For example, in year 2020 Your employer shouldn't be your employer for year 2019, he should still be the employer for year 2020 If you know what I mean
Q: pls I'm not clear with the Essays part ? What are we writing on and which themes are you advising we stick to sir?? Thank you!	A: For admission purpose- You are writing your Personal statements, Motivation letter or SOP Let it just have a bit of an element of those themes PS- those themes can change or be improved upon This is what they would consider before nominations, once they see it falls in line with their Themes... You will definitely be in luck
Q: Sir.. Last year.. I had 2 admission with the University of Wageningen.. Food safety and Food Quality Management.. Fortunately for me..I was nominated for the OKP although I was hoping I get the African scholarship..cos I knew less about OKP.. Fast forward..I had problems getting the employment statement.. I will need their letter head and stamp in the letter.. and I tried getting my former employer to agree to the terms.. but having read through he was not convinced and he claims its against his faith to help lie and stuff like dat	A: It's highly probable you get nominated, as long as work don't beat you to it It's risky leaving your chances on the works of the previous year. Schools are only allowed to nominate the best out of the ones nominated. If others get admitted with a better essay, they might get nominated ahead of you... That's the risk Admission can be sure, Nomination won't be More so, change your employer, he is definitely not willing to help a fellow, apparently, he can't go against his faith. Nothing might change that Please find help somewhere else I deferred my admissions to this academic session..whats the probability of me getting nominated for the scholarship again
Q: Do Nigerians also need to submit English tests (IELTS, TOEFL etcetera) to proof their English proficiency??	A: Honestly, most schools in the Netherlands don't need language proficiency tests My advice - do a background check on your school before any application
Q: Sir, how many course can we apply for at a time taking SI Scholarship which allow maximum of	A: OKP scholarship is just one oooo They have a database... Multiple applications

four courses as example. Thanks	would be discovered and filtered off
Q: Good evening scholars... I wanted to ask, do we have any scholar on short courses in the Netherlands?	A: Yes, many sef There are 27 Nigerians currently awarded scholarships for short courses in the Netherlands
Q: About the employment part, please if we are currently volunteering in an organization not related to our field of study can the employer also help in filling our employment form, irrespective of the volunteering	A: Volunteering isn't an Employment oo The Scholarship Board "NUFFIC" needs an assurance of you having an income while you're away in the Netherlands studying
Q: for someone who holds a master's degree and wish to apply for another master's degree under OKP scholarship, Is it allowed or will the scholarship be granted to such a candidate?	A: Hmmm Tricky But I think it for people like us with just Bachelor's degree I think favour will fall for freshers
Q: Related to your answer in question 8. Since is a full scholarship, why are they concern with a candidate "assurance of having an income while he/she is away in the Netherlands?	A: That's the clause of the Scholarship The Scholarship management want to award people that have the avenue to make impact in such a short time after the completion of the MSc programme. Impact in the sense that you have to put your knowledge to use at your place of employment, that's why there is a need for Employer's statement There are questions relating to your relevance at your work place
Q: When is their application usually opened?	A: Currently, applications for Round 2 is on hold because of the pandemic The management is make some adjustments on the scholarship focus and programmes Hopefully, next year February/March When it's out, trust me you would know
Q: So what if we work with a private firm that would not be willing to pay us while we are away, but can agree to write the letter on our behalf. Would the OKP stipend be able to cater for a scholar? Should we proceed?	A: Without the agreement that they are going to pay you, the Employer statement won't be signed Be smart, try to find another around it
Q: What kind of essay questions do they ask? This could give us an idea of how to prepare.	A: Questions change ooo... Questions can change For admission, it varies with the school You can't be too sure. But you can work on Personal statements of your related field and talk about any of the themes... The theme is their focus
Q: What's is the chance of someone that read math or stat?	A: Hmmm Have you checked if your programme of choice is available on their list

If it is, then you have no problem
Fire on abeg ... You must win ooo

Q: Please can you briefly dah through the themes?

A: Food and nutrition security
Water, energy and climate
Sexual and reproductive health and rights
Security and the rule of law
Talk about any of these, I'm sure your programme
would relate to any of them
PS: the themes can be changed



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