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TRANSCRIPT OF LECTURE [ISF 7]:

THE MASTERCARD FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY, CANADA

Saturday 3rd October, 2020; 2000 WAT

Lecturer: Hope Zimba

B.Sc.: Bachelor's degree in Arts with Education from the University of Zambia, Zambia;

M.Sc.: Counselling and Educational Psychology, McGill University, Canada under the sponsorship of MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program.

Research Interests: equality in educational provision, continuous professional development, wellness and mental health, child protection.

Other Roles: Board member at Impact Network; Mentor in the Office of Students with Disabilities at McGill University.

Moderator: Scholar Taiwo Ridwan

Transmission Crew:

ISF > Scholars Justin, Hussein, AbdulMutolib, Oluwatobi, Godwin.

ASF > Scholars Olamiposi, Paulotimi.

ISFM > Scholar Ridwan.

Foremost Research Groups > Scholar Hydrospecs.

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Admin: Researcher Bankole & ISFM Scholar Obasekore Hameed

Lecture Agenda

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Why Choose McGill University, Canada?

The scholarship at McGill, has recently been made exclusive to Africans intending to pursue graduate school programs. McGill is one of the most prestigious schools in Canada, I refer to it as the "Harvard of Canada". It offers all kinds of resources you need to succeed as a student ranging from academic resources, skills development programmes, well-being support and social services. Being at McGill opens doors for you in any professional field you would like to pursue after completion of study.

Benefits of the MCF Scholarship at McGill University

Page 3 of the attached PowerPoint outlines all the benefits that come with the scholarship, viz:

- All costs related to the application and immigration processes.
- Flight ticket to Montreal, Canada and return ticket at program completion.
- All tuition costs.
- All accommodation costs.
- Monthly stipends (groceries, transport, etc).
- Medical expenses not covered by school insurance.

Application Process at McGill University

The step-by-step process for application is available at the university website <https://www.mcgill.ca/mastercardfdn-scholars/apply-program>.

You can also identify your program of interest from the available options at <https://www.mcgill.ca/mastercardfdn-scholars/apply-program/programs-study>. Note that all programs available are non-thesis.

Once you have identified your program of choice and started the application process, reach out to the department with the required documents (motivation letter, transcript and CV).

Nomination for the MasterCard Foundation Scholarship

The nomination process differs from one department to the other. The universal procedure is you submit your personal statement, CV and transcript to the department and request that they nominate you for the scholarship.

However, programs that have a project requirement (like electrical engineering or mechanical engineering) require you to reach out to a professor within the department with similar research interests as you and request that they nominate you for the scholarship, consequently becoming your supervisor for the project.

Tips for Required Documentation

To be nominated, you have to write a compelling personal statement. I found that there are so many templates on the web that you can refer to when writing personal statements. I sampled and included a link to that suggested by University of California Davis (<https://financialaid.ucdavis.edu/scholarships/tips/personal>) on qualities of a good personal statement.

My personal structure however flows this way;

- Introduce yourself in the first paragraph, detailing your qualifications and current employment situation. Use this information to show how your experiences and qualifications relate to your intended program of study.
- Explain what gap(s) you have noticed in your community, company or country and how your pursuit of your intended program will help close said gap(s). Why is it relevant to others around you that you pursue the program?
- Show how the program will be relevant to your personal values and will help in fulfilling your individual and career goals.
- For students seeking supervisors, make it clear that your program of study will be fully sponsored by McGill if they nominate you, thus making the professors aware there will be no cost burdens on them.
- In your statement to the professors, show how their research interests align with yours, what you hope to learn from them and what they will gain from your experience and expertise.
- Flatter the school by explaining why you are choosing McGill, and that specific department and not another school or department. Show that you have read about the department and their achievements and are truly interested in being a part of the McGill community.

All this information is relevant to acquiring nomination for the MCF scholarship. Once you have been nominated, the real work begins. The truth is, the application process for MCF is complex, and you have to be ready to put in the work to get it. While you wait for nominations, ensure you secure your referees, have original transcripts ready and practice writing the required essays.

Cheers!

Attached Document

Find attached the original PowerPoint slides for this lecture.



Questions & Answers

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- Q:** I have tried applying for McGill scholarship, I get the message that I can't use a mobile phone. Is it compulsory to use a PC for the application?
- A:** To complete the application on *uapply*, you will need to use a PC.
Note: *Do not begin a uapply application before receiving your nomination from the department.*
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- Q:** While writing a personal essay, is writing about one's financial setbacks unnecessary?
- A:** Your personal statement is primarily for your department and not MCF, your intention being to convince your department to admit you to the program. However, you need to include a line or two indicating that without the MCF scholarship, you will not be able to pursue the program.
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- Q:** Do unemployed recent graduates stand a chance to be nominated? Because you mentioned something about employment status in writing the personal statement.
- A:** Most definitely. In your personal statement or even your essays you can focus on where your strengths lie. If you do not have any experience but your undergrad qualifications make you a suitable candidate, spend a few extra lines explaining that. You can also include any volunteer experience you have.
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- Q:** Can someone with an MSc apply for a MCF PhD scholarship?
- A:** As far as I know, MCF only offers scholarships in secondary education, undergraduate and master's level. I am not aware of any MCF scholarships in PHD programs.
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- Q:** Can I conclude that whoever isn't nominated cannot apply for the scholarship?
If one isn't nominated, is there any other means of applying?
- A:** At McGill, your scholarship application is dependent on your admission to your department of choice, if the department does not nominate you then you cannot apply.
What you can do is apply to at least 3 departments for nomination to increase your chances.
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- Q:** Do you think being married will affect being selected for MCF since there is need to prove that funding is a limitation to education in the essay?
- A:** As long as you are within the stipulated age range, being married does not matter to MCF. And marriage is in no way a sign of your financial stability.
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- Q:** Is the MCF scholarship meant for first-class graduates only?
- A:** Each program and department have different stipulations for their minimum required GPA, be sure to check what the relevant requirements are.
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