



# INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP FORUM (ISF)

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## TRANSCRIPT OF LECTURE [ISF 7]:

### SWEDISH SCHOLARSHIP INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL PROFESSIONALS (SISGP)

Saturday 7<sup>TH</sup> November, 2020; 20:00 WAT

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B.Sc.: Bachelor's degree in Pharmacy from the Nnamdi Azikiwe University

M.Sc.: Global Health at the Sahlgrenska Academy, Institute of Medicine, the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Research Interests: infectious diseases epidemiology, surveillance and antimicrobial resistance.

Awards: Swedish Institute Scholarship for Global Professionals, Commonwealth Masters Scholarship for Low-Middle income countries.

Other interests: She loves to make friends and is an advocate of SDG 3

Moderator: Scholar Hussein

Transmission Crew:

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## Lecture Agenda

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Good evening all,

**Before we start the conversation tonight**, please if you plan to apply for the S.I scholarship I expect that you must have gone through the S.I website and the university admission website. If you have not, **please do**.

Having mentioned that, these are the most important websites you would find useful: -

- <https://si.se/en/apply/scholarships/swedish-institute-scholarships-for-global-professionals/>
- <https://www.universityadmissions.se/intl/start>

These are the most important website you need. The first website I shared is for the S.I scholarship while the other one is for admission process. They work hand in hand. Now to the agenda for the night,

## Why SWEDEN?

1. Sweden is one of the best countries in the Europe with very strong and internationally accepted educational and healthcare system. In terms of academics, the educational system here is top notch both in research and academic prowess. As for me, I call it the “the home of the Nobel laureates” lol. I mean most Nobel prizes are selected by many Swedish universities. The Nobel Prize as we all know was established by the Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel and has been awarded by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences for more than 100 years now. For example, Nobel prize in Medicine is nominated by the Karolinska Institutet which is one of the best schools of medicine in the world and many more prizes.  
Also, many successful inventions in the world are products of successful research at Swedish universities and companies. Example; the computer mouse, Bluetooth, the pacemaker, the ball bearing, the dialysis machine, vaccines, medical procedures and internet applications such as Spotify and Skype which we all use today are all products from Swedish universities. **If you love academic excellence and innovations, this is where you ought to be guys.**
2. Ability to learn new international language while studying, even though most of the studies are taught in English. You can learn Swedish if you plan to stay back or just add it to your language proficiencies who knows when you would need it.
3. Ability to travel around Europe with your Swedish student visa. Since the inception of Brexit, having a UK student visa is not enough to go to many countries in the world. So if you want to go to a lot of European countries while studying, you definitely need a Swedish visa. With Swedish student visa, you can travel to Germany, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Poland, Netherlands etc.
4. Ability to intern or work with renowned companies/organization. Sweden is very good with business and innovation; thus, many students have had the opportunity to work and intern in various multinational organization/companies. In Sweden we have companies like Spotify, H&M, AstraZeneca, Volvo, IKEA and Ericsson that have their headquarters in Sweden, so you can benefit from this opportunity to work with them especially with your Swedish certificates and of course ability to speak Swedish.
5. As a student you can work as many hours you want, provided that it doesn't affect your studies. For S.I scholars, you can only work when you have excelled in most of your courses, though.
6. Sweden is a calm country with few populations and their indigenes are really nice. Everything is working here.
7. You have the ability to remain in Sweden to work if you don't want to go back to your country.
8. You enjoy the benefit of equality in full. Women and men are given equal opportunities to thrive here in Sweden. When it comes to income inequality for example, Sweden ranks number 1 in the whole world. My lecturer will always say there is no poverty in Sweden. 😊. The reason is basically the kind of system they run, Sweden is a socialist country unlike the US , UK that run a capitalist economy thus they have a very supportive welfare system.

9. Also S.I scholarship is one of the easiest scholarship to apply for and very easy to be rejected. You don't need to have a first class to get it. But then You must be someone that is very patient to read, you need to go through the website thoroughly and also ask questions when necessary. Please do not wait for deadlines because you have a lot to do. Start now to start involving in professional networks if you are not already in one and volunteer in a lot of organizations that are doing their projects related to SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals).

## Overview of the Swedish Institute of Global Professionals (SISPG)

The Swedish Institute Scholarship for Global Professionals (SISGP) is a scholarship sponsored by the Swedish Government to help to empower young leaders who have shown potential to bring positive change to their different countries. This means that you must show a clear track of what you have done so far in your country and have a clear vision of what you would use your education to do in your country after the scholarship.

This does not mean that you cannot stay back if you wish to, in fact after your program, S.I gives you the opportunity to apply for a maximum 6-month internship opportunity in case you do not get a job before then and you will be paid.

However unlike in 2020, the Swedish Institute will grant about 350 scholarships for master's degree studies in 2021.

*NB: In case there are South Africans here, there is SISSA which is made for only South Africans*

### Origin and Focus Area:

S.I focus is on people already working towards and/or would contribute to the achievement of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in their countries. The SISGP is open to 42 countries (last year it was actually 65 countries, so you see the competition might not be that intense this year).

### Benefit:

As an S.I scholar you will be entitled to;

- Tuition fees to be paid directly to the Swedish university where you are admitted to.
- Living expenses of SEK 10,000/month
- Travel grant of SEK 15,000
- health Insurance against illness and accident.
- Membership of a network of global leaders; SI Network for Future Global Leaders (NFGYL). During your programme, you will be opportune to visit many institutions and companies in Sweden and Denmark through this network. These events will be fully sponsored by the S.I. This is a great opportunity to network and go to many beautiful places that can impact you professionally. For example, the 2019/2020 scholars visited Volvo, United Nation City in Copenhagen etc until Covid struck. This year, even though we have plans but we might not be able to do much due to COVID (well, it is like that in many countries).
- As a SI scholar, if you are married, your SI scholarship visa allows you to apply for visa for your family provided that you can show a proof that you can take care of them. Also, If you travel with your family, their schooling is free. So your wife can come here and start her master's programme for free (this is not done under any other scholarship for masters unless maybe Ph.D.). Ph.D. positions in Sweden is also free for many courses and you are paid as an employee.

## Admission Process

### Documents Required

The documents required for admission process are: -

1. Bachelor's degree certificate
2. English proficiency proof: credit in GCE O-level, SSCE/WASSCE/NTB/NTC is just fine, you do not need IELTS
3. Transcript: Your official transcript must be sent directly from your university to [verifications@uhr.se](mailto:verifications@uhr.se). or via post mostly through UPS or DHL. Before you send through post mail, remember to download a cover letter which is always at the university admission website. You are to send it with the transcript.
4. International passport
5. Supporting documents as requested by your university: most times this include; motivation letters, reference letters and work experience forms/CV.

In addition to the general requirements, there are specific information based on the country where you got your bachelor's degrees. *For example, Nigerians do not require IELTS, also transcript must not be uploaded. Please study the university admission website correctly, Sweden is very good with instructions and rules, anything contrary to this, you will risk disqualification.*

### Selection of 4 Universities

I think this is subjective because, there are many reasons people choose their universities.

Your choice of universities can be influenced by many reasons which include; global ranking of the university, duration of course, competition among other applicants (some universities are more competitive than others) or the university's proficiency in your chosen course.

Another important factor is potential for further academic progression / network or even the city where it is located. I personally consider city while choosing my universities, (maybe in terms of cost of living there and being lively. I don't like dull cities 😊). But whatever the reason is for you, make sure you get it right.

Also, in still on choices, use the priority check to arrange your choices according to 1st choice, 2nd choice etc. Finally, after applying electronically, you can proceed with the application fees payment.

## How to secure the Swedish Institute of Global Professionals (SISGP)

Before you apply for the S.I scholarship, **you must have applied for your admission through the university admissions.se**. This usually starts in October and ends in January. Then the S.I scholarship starts from February.

Please note that the application window for the scholarship usually last for 10 days. This is where the trick lies because most times before the scholarship application opens, they always release their documents beforehand so that you can try to fill the form and also sign where you are to sign. Please based on this short term I would advise you to alert your referees on time, I know most of them can disappoint. Please disturb them if you have to.

### Expected profile

S.I is looking for those who have shown strong motivation and passion for their career path, great ambition, leadership and good professional background. This must tally with your work experience and career plans afterwards especially toward the UN agenda for SDGS.

### Documents required for the scholarship

You would be provided four forms, namely:

- Motivation letter
- CV
- Proof of Work and Leadership Experience
- Letter of references



*(I will share the forms they used last year, it might change this year but this is to give you a glimpse of what to expect)*

## Writing a compelling motivational letter for SISGP

In my own thoughts and experience. while writing a compelling motivational letter for the SIGP and even other scholarships, one thing must be obvious. Your passion towards your course, clear vision of what you want to do and most importantly humility to learn new things.

Like I always say, the people reading your scholarship applications are humans, the goal is to get their attention but don't push it too far. **The attention of the S.I is centred on SDGS as I have mentioned earlier, so you must think like them.** it is a maximum of 250 words. However, you must be intentional. Permit me to say that before you start applying for a scholarship, remember that you must have a career plan, your motivation must be crystal clear. What you have done, what you intend to do, what you will learn from your programme must be clear. If you are ready to put these down it helps you not just in S.I application but for other international scholarship application. Also, unlike other scholarships, S.I doesn't care if you are a first class, second class etc. Just show that you are academically sound, have great leadership position and show them why you think they should spend millions of Naira to you.

## Other Remarks (CV, Proof of work and leadership experience, Letter of reference)

I believe we have taken a look at the forms I shared earlier, please if you have not, try and take a look at that so you can understand what I will be saying now 🙌🙌.

Read the instructions to understand before you fill, like I said the forms change every year especially the motivation letter but not that much, just to get the necessary information ready and tell the people you need to tell in case you need them.

First for your Proof of Work Experience. For you to be eligible for SISGP, you must have had at least 3,000 hours' work experience prior to the official date of the scholarship application as written on the website.

The work experience will be from a maximum of three organisations/companies. Meaning that you can combine work experience from different organisations to make up 3000hrs, example maybe from Internship, part-time and then full time. Please make sure that the work experience and leadership experience forms are stamped and signed (it should be related to SDGs please). Remember the reviewer has to know that you are interested in SDGS and you have very strong professional background.

You must subtly paint the picture you want of you in their mind. In my own case, I focused more on SDG 3 (good health and well-being), sd4 (quality education) and SDG 5 (gender equality). My entire application was centred on these three SDGs.

Another important point is If your referees don't have a stamp, you can get a letter from a notary office. Also, be it professional referees, work experience form, network/voluntary form. Make sure you stamp, sign and affix date. This is very important, it is also written there as an instruction

In choosing your referees, please make sure you have someone that can vouch for your character and career goals. It should reflect on the letter because they will ask him/her some critical questions he needs to think before answering. It is also advisable that they have company website and remember to stamp.

You are required to use two persons as your referees, one from work experience and the other from maybe a network you are involved in or NGO. This is because it reflects your leadership potential and ability to create positive changes in your society not just academics.

If you are a founder/CEO of a company. You can use your employee but remember to stamp with your organization's stamp please and input website if you have any. Also, professional emails are advised too.

Finally, For CV, you just need to edit and put in your information on work experience, network/NGO, Awards and add your international passport. Remember to add your passport (very important)

Another important information is to be specific to mentions in clear terms how many numbers of people that are under you or you have been able to influence with in your career or network (they would ask you this).

Finally, the SI have their eligible course which they only sponsor. Go to their website and have a look, these are the courses you are supposed to choose from if you are applying for the SI scholarship.

This is the end of my lecture; I am open to answer any question as time permits me.

## Questions & Answers

<b>Q:</b> Please can you give list of universities one may consider?	<b>A:</b> Like I said earlier, it is based on your personal choice. Personally, I choose my universities based on the global ranking, the city and the proficiency of the university in my course. Other people might choose based on competition; some people don't like applying to very competitive schools. It depends on if you think you can ace the application based on your academic and work experience including certification. Swedish admission is not like UK universities, not to scare you but they place a lot of people on reserve.
<b>Q:</b> I have a BA in Education however; I work with an NGO now. I am interested in a development related Masters. What are my chances?	<b>A:</b> Go to their website of the school you have chosen and check their requirements. This will guide you to know if you would be admitted or not.
<b>Q:</b> Please can you explain how getting a letter from a notary means if the company I work with don't have office stamp. Thanks	<b>A:</b> A letter from the notary office is gotten from the legal practitioner to show that what you are saying in your application is true. You can talk with lawyers; they know more about this. The letter must have a stamp from the notary office.
<b>Q:</b> I own a start-up tech company, what are my chances of studying Biotechnology as Masters (with Scholarship) in Sweden	<b>A:</b> Is your start-up company related to Biotech? what of your academic qualification, is it related to biotech? Sweden is looking for global leaders with professional experience. You cannot have an academic background in banking and finance, you are coming to study bioscience for example. You wouldn't be taken seriously.
<b>Q:</b> 1- please can one apply more than one University? 2- And please how can one know when the scholarship opens so that one can be alert?	<b>A:</b> Yes you can apply for more than one universities. In fact you are free to apply for a maximum of 4 universities and your application fee covers for all of them.  You will need to be checking. They have mentioned that it will open. Go to their website, also follow them on Facebook. I shared their website earlier.
<b>Q:</b> Where are we meant to send our official transcripts?	<b>A:</b> You are to send it to the email I sent before.  you can also post (you have to verify the address on their website) due to COVID, A lot of people

have been having problems with postal service. So, I don't know how they plan to do this but you can send to the official website here  
Through your school official website:  
[verifications@uhr.se](mailto:verifications@uhr.se)

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| <b>Q:</b> I will like to ask as regards the CV. I notice the default font size for filling it is 9. I tried using it but it kinda looks too tiny. Can i bump it up a bit considering the fact that they said the format of the document should not be altered.                             | <b>A:</b> Use the font size they used. They will see it. This is because increasing the font size will affect the number of pages too. They have a particular number of pages they request as well.            |
| <b>Q:</b> Is the scholarship restricted for Masters programme only or Ph.D. aspirants can also apply?  | <b>A:</b> Masters only.  |
| <b>Q:</b> For proof of leadership experience, I'm the head of the organization of an NGO but I don't have a stamp available. What do you suggest I do ?  | <b>A:</b> If you don't have a stamp, is time you created one. Or you use the letter from the notary office as an alternative.  |
| <b>Q:</b> Secondly the letter of reference and proof of work also requires detailed answers, can we also those questions to the best of our ability n just give the referees to sign and stamp?<br>Most of them don't have time and will just write something small.                       | <b>A:</b> You can answer the questions yourself and give your referees to proofread. Make sure they approve of this.   |
| <b>Q:</b> The templates for the motivational letter is different each year is different. And you can only answer based on the questions asked.<br>How do we tackle this please? Also the word limit are small... no much opportunity to write.   | <b>A:</b> please, use the required number of words, that is the academic discipline. Go straight to the point and answer the questions.  |
| <b>Q:</b> For those that don't have work experience related to their undergraduate degree, how will this be solved<br>E.g:- B. Tech in Mechanical Engineering, work experience: 1. NYSC: Course Instructor.<br>Proposed Master course: Sustainable Energy.<br>Is this fit the scholarship? | <b>A:</b> Yes it can get you admission but your work experience in your field should be at least 3000 hrs.   |
| <b>Q:</b> Is the application fee for the 3 schools or we will have to pay individually?<br>3 or 4 schools?   | <b>A:</b> For the three schools. Maximum is four schools. Some people even apply to just one school especially when the courses are not related to your field.   |
| <b>Q:</b> Can I send a WES Evaluated transcript for the Swedish admission and scholarship?   | <b>A:</b> It should be sent by your school. With their stamp on the letter if you are sending through post or you send it directly through your university's official email address.                           |
| <b>Q:</b> What if I initiate the application on Universityadmissions.se, and have already attached/uploaded my unofficial transcript ( even though I'll have the official copy, sent by my school). Will this be detrimental to my application for admission?                              | <b>A:</b> I doubt if it would be a problem. Just endeavour to send it to then officially through email or post. You can also email your university and University admission to let them know of what happened. |
| <b>Q:</b> I have tried severally to pay my application fees from Nigeria, with no success. The transaction goes, an OTP is sent, once I input the OTP it seems like the site reboots, and the money will not be  | <b>A:</b> , I didn't experience that. I paid with my GTB mater card and it went successfully. Yes, your admission can only be processed after payment. You can use   |

deducted from my account. I have tried this with several banks, and cards. What this implies is that my application will not be processed until I succeed at paying the application fee. Did you experience this? And please what solution can you proffer.	another person's card to try this. Sorry about the challenges
<b>Q:</b> My question is on leadership experience.  What type of leadership experience do they really want?	<b>A:</b> Either managerial positions, founder, CEO, Technical head , Treasurer, President, Project Coordinator.  It depends on where you have been opportune to be in a leadership position. It might not even be work but maybe an organisation t network you are involved in.
<b>Q:</b> Pls it a must to get an international passport before proceeding with the application?	<b>A:</b> Yes, it is required
<b>Q:</b> Is teaching as a work experience (Science Teacher, Physics and Mathematics) practical work experience for someone with engineering background who want to study either, Manufacturing, energy, material science for Msc.?	<b>A:</b> This might work but then you need to connect it a little bit by mentioning that you do practical too.
<b>Q:</b> During my service year where I have about 10 months' work experience. Simultaneously, I volunteered as an SDGs advocate through NYSC SDGs. Can that count towards my volunteer and work experience?	<b>A:</b> Yes, provided that the number of hours are within the requirement.
<b>Q:</b> I served as the project coordinator during my undergraduate, I worked with a State Ministry of Health during NYSC and now I'm working with an NGO as a volunteer but we have team we work with which I'm opportune to head my team. Can my work and leadership experience start right from undergraduate days?	<b>A:</b> Yes, provided that the number of hours are within the requirement.
<b>Q:</b> About the referee, is it the same referee we'd use in work and leadership experience we'd still use in the reference form or they're different?	<b>A:</b> You can use same, if you don't have any other activities. Like you were both in a leadership position in your work place.  Also, reference letter is one from a work environment, the second one should be from NGO/Network.

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