



## TRANSCRIPT OF LECTURE DELIVERED ON AUGUST 24, 2019.

### (FORUM 5)

THEME: Exploring Scholarship Opportunities (especially **PhD**) in Italy

LECTURER » **Engr. Raji Ibrahim** (Università Carlo Cattaneo – LIUC, Italy)

TRANSMISSION CREW » **Scholars: Theorem, Kenny, Onyeka, Monsur, Ojo Temitope, Etubi, & Researcher Tobi**

MODERATOR » **Scholar Kayode**

### LECTURE AGENDA

1. What's fascinating about Italy?
2. Scholarship and funding opportunities in Italy (PhD; MSc)
3. Application Requirements
4. Some notable benefits of the PhD scholarships
5. Selection and Award
6. Other Remarks
7. Questions & Answers

### WHAT'S FASCINATING ABOUT ITALY?

Italy is among the Top 4 economies in Europe (Germany, UK, France and Italy): For fashion lovers, Italy is the home of fashion in terms of global best brands; for people that love Adventures, you can tour at least 27 countries freely before you complete your programme.

### SCHOLARSHIP AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IN ITALY

Most Italian Universities have funding, typically PhD, which are usually announced as annual "Cycles." There really is no "Special Call" for MSc Scholarships, but there are funding opportunities that one can apply for upon gaining admission. I will mention some later on.

Just to reiterate, Italian Universities have PhD funding which are announced as annual "Cycles." Following is a list of Universities that have such annual calls:

- 1, **Politecnico di Milano** 2, Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa (university of Pisa) 3, **University of Bologna** 4, Sapienza University of Rome
- 5, **Università di Padova** 6, University of Milan
- 7, Politecnico di Torino 8, **University of Pisa**
- 9, **University of Trento** 10, University of Naples - Federico II
- 11, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore 12, **Università Carlo Cattaneo – LIUC** 13, University of Florence 14, University of Rome "Tor Vergata"
- 15, **University of Turin** 16, Università degli Studi di Pavia
- 17, University of Milano-Bicocca 18, **Università degli Studi di Ferrara** 19, University of Genoa 20, University of Siena
- 21, **University of Trieste** 22, **University of Brescia**
- 23, Ca' Foscari University of Venice 24, **Università degli Studi di Perugia** 25, Catania University 26, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia
- 27, **University of Palermo** 28, University of Bari
- 29, Verona University 30, **Free University of Bozen-Bolzano**
- 31, University of Salerno 32, Polytechnic University of Bari
- 33, **University of Calabria** 34, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart
- 35, Marche Polytechnic University 36, **University of Bergamo**
- 37, **University of Parma**
- 38, University of Salento 39, **University of Udine**
- 40, **University of Cagliari** 41, University of Sassari

The above schools have annual PhD scholarship calls around February – May each year. Access the website of each. If home page is in Italian, you will see the UK/US flag icon at one corner to switch language to English. Alternatively, you can browse with Google chrome and you can click on “translate to English” icon usually at the address bar. Navigate to the PhD section, then you will see the calls (if available). If not announced yet, you will see the past calls and that will guide you on the time of call announcement.

**Please note:** Different Universities have different programmes (sometimes multi-disciplinary) included in their calls. For instance, for serial number 12 (LIUC), the calls are for candidates having background of Industrial/Production/Manufacturing/Management Engineering, Economics, Finance and General Management. Endeavour to study the calls to master the specific requirements and how to package your application. All in all, all universities in the attached list proffer good chance for international students which most of us aren't aware of.

### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICATION**

- ✓ MSc result is needed for all the Universities,
- ✓ Good academic background
- ✓ English Language Certification: Some require English proficiency certificate while submitting application, others may accept letter of English language proficiency from your home University during application but you will still write either IELTS/Cambridge BEC before you graduate (Some schools will pay on your behalf)

### **SOME NOTABLE BENEFITS OF THE PhD SCHOLARSHIPS**

- ✓ Free tuition
- ✓ Good monthly stipend
- ✓ Annual travel budget for conferences and workshops. If you love adventure like me, you can use this opportunity to travel round all the continents and not just within Europe
- ✓ Mobility Grant to conduct research in another country for 3-6 months
- ✓ Possibility of having extra title “Doctor Europaeus” for those that fulfil the requirements of the ‘European University Association.’

### **SELECTION AND AWARD**

All candidates are ranked and, usually, the top 20 or 30 in some cases, are invited for next stage which could be Technical Presentation and/or Oral Interview. The rankings are usually published on the website. The ranking is based on: candidates’ knowledge and skills to carry out PhD Research (Proxy: Graduation pathway - past thesis and grades, professional experience, motivation and attitude towards scientific research etc.), language proficiency and the like.

Usually, the application requires those write-ups like SOP, short PhD Concept Note, Essay on Benefits to humanity etc.

### **OTHER REMARKS**

Aside the compiled Universities which are funded by Italian government, there are also few research institutes that offer PhD fellowships. Other Institutes with PhD funding are as follows:

- ❖ **ICGEB:** They also offer annual PhD Fellowships. The available calls are usually for graduates with Microbiology, Biochemistry, Physiology, Anatomy, Genetic Engineering, Neuro Science and related backgrounds. This institute offers a cool fellowship and it's under the UN. For ICGEB, the key to getting fellowship is trickier because one needs to secure

a **potential Supervisor** before having a chance of getting the fellowship. Here is the link to ICgeb: <https://www.icgeb.org/activities/fellowship/>

For those interested in this institute, what you need do is **to explore the various laboratories** and get to know the ongoing researches in those labs. After that, you try to **put up a short Concept Note** and then use that to **establish contact with professors** in such labs which you have identified.

❖ Another institute is the **ICTP** which is for graduates of Physics, Maths etc. The link to ICTP is: <https://www.ictp.it/about-ictp/ictp-italy.aspx#>. At the moment, I don't know much about the funding procedure of the ICTP, so. If interested, I implore us to explore their website and get necessary information. The fact is, Nigerians are very many in that institute.

❖ To prospective **MSc** Scholars

As said earlier, there isn't really a special scholarship application call for MSc. What you do is **gain admission** into any **Government University**, then use the enrolment letter to **apply for funding from governmental agencies** like: Laziodisco, Ardiss etc. For Laziodisco, it offers 5,000 euros annual Stipend with Accommodation. The link to apply for Laziodisco is: <http://www.laziodisco.it/>. Ardiss also provides stipends, Accomodation grant and food subsidy (in some Regions). The link to apply for this is: <http://www.ardiss.fvg.it/contenuti.php?view=page&id=238>

❖ To those who intend to sponsor their education all by themselves, perhaps when scholarship opportunities aren't forthcoming:

Some Italian government schools place Nigeria in the list of less developed countries, hence, they pay very low tuition like 400 euros in first year and 250 in subsequent years. But these are for BSc and MSc programmes alone and examples of such schools are: University of Milano, Pavia, Padova... to mention the few I have knowledge of. On getting to Italy, you will most probably get one thing or another to do so as to earn a living. One important note to that effect is that language is essential if you intend working outside the university environment.

As a side note, For the UG study. You go to the website of those universities to see if your choice course is offered in English. Also, check their fee requirements as it is not all the Schools that you can enjoy such privilege. Then when you gain admission into such schools that offer such privilege to Nigerians, you will only pay 150 Euros for enrollment and 250 euro for school fee in the first year. The subsequent years will only be 250 Euros. For the requirements. You need WAEC and not NECO. Italian embassy in Nigeria doesn't accept NECO. Then I heard you must be less than 26 years, otherwise, Italian embassy in Nigeria will not give you visa. Mind you, that's just the discretion of Italian Consulate in Nigeria.

Note that the NECO clause is for BSc peeps really. If you are going for PhD, it's your BSc and MSc degrees that matters with the Consulate.

### ❖ **LIFE AFTER SCHOOL**

After graduation, you have opportunity of One-year renewal of your residence permit (Recall that we don't use Student Visa in EU, but Residence Permit). You can use the One-year gap to search for job or something.

The good thing is that, not only will you search for job in Italy, but, your residence permit allows you to move within the Schengen area that comprises Germany, France, Finland etc. Thus, if God wills it, you can get something within that one year in other EU countries.

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Q. <i>Does this scheme cover courses in Arts and social sciences or just science courses?</i>                     | A. I think when you explore the websites, you will see the programmes included in the calls. There are Finance and Economics related courses—I'm very sure of that, but for Arts, I'm not too sure unless we explore. |
| Q. <i>What is meant by PhD concept note?</i>  | A. PhD concept note is a short form of your proposal, that is, when you just dish out some things and not the full details of your proposal yet. It is usually 5 pages max.   |
| Q. <i>What is the stipend range for PhD scholarship?</i>  | A. The stipend range for PhD is 1,200-1,500 Euros per month, depending on the school.   |
| Q. <i>Is work and study possible to make extra income</i>   | A. If you are on full scholarship, I don't think you need to work outside, because if you don't finish after 36 months, there will be no more stipend. They expect you to fully concentrate and finish on time.       |
| Q. <i>Can one get a residence permit after study and probably citizenship</i>                                     | A. After study, and if you get a job, you can upgrade to residence permit for work and after cumulative 5 years in Italy, you get PR. After 10 years cumulatively in Italy, you apply for blue passport (European).   |
| Q. <i>Do married candidates also get to travel with their family having secured PhD funding?</i>                  | A. Yes, you can bring your spouse along. I have my wife and son with me here and to God be the glory, the stipend is sufficient for us.   |
| Q. <i>RE: ICTP, can a statistics students apply?</i>  | A. Why not? So far you have the background to research in the various centres or units.   |
| Q. <i>Is there application fee to be paid for applying to those schools for PhD</i>                               | A. No application fee for PhD programmes. Remember they are special calls, although for MSc admission, few universities require application fee.  |
| Q. <i>Do I need to have any result apart from my degree result, if I intend financing my education by myself?</i> | A. For MSc, just degree is needed. For PhD, they won't even take you if you don't qualify for their scholarships.   |



- Q. *Please, can you elaborate more on the case of MSc in Italy?* A. Msc in Italy is very rigorous and of good standard. But you must be careful to check language of instruction as some are taught in Italian and not English. The duration is 18-24 months depending on the programme.
- Q. *Do they require an applicant to have their certificate evaluated?* A. This question sounds not clear. However, if you mean evaluating certificate for equivalent, well... if you get your certificate outside EU, you will need to do what they call "DOV" before you will apply for visa. Mind you, that's for the government universities, and those special institutes like ICGEB don't require this. Also, you will get a "DOV" from Italian Consulate in Nigeria or the country you obtained your degree from.
- Q. *For instance if you have MSc admission to UCSC (Università de cattolica sucro, Cremona) and you have to pay general Administrative fee of 156,00 euros. Can any of these organizations raise such fee?* A. Nope. You need to pay the enrolment fee all by yourself. Once you get the funding from those organizations, they will only be giving you the yearly stipend and accommodation benefit.
- Q. *Please what's the prospect of those who are in Agricultural fields and are interested?* A. Yes, you can see courses related to agriculture like Agric. economics, innovation in Agriculture etc. for PhD Candidates. Sure, there are prospects after graduation also
- Q. *Is it possible to see schools that accept online documents alone, as against hard copies, during the course of applying* A. I'm not sure of this, because different schools have different requirements. But I think for most PhD calls, you can apply with digital copies of your documents and once selected, you will be asked to enroll and send hard copies of credentials. Again, remember you need DOV from the Consulate in Nigeria, those ones will drill you for the original and legalized documents prior issuing DOV.