



# INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP FORUM (ISF)

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## TRANSCRIPT OF LECTURE [ISFM]:

### BANACH NAWA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME - BACKGROUND, QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS)

Thursday 27<sup>TH</sup> May, 2021; 20:00 WAT

Lecturer: Kayode James Olaleye

Profile of the speaker:

Kaode James Olaleye is a recipient of the NAWA scholarship currently undergoing his masters in Politechnika Wrocławska also known as Wroclaw University of Science and Technology. He's currently in the domain of Chemistry and Engineering of Materials with a focus on Advanced Nano and Biomaterials.

Lecturer 2: Damaris Ajayi e

Profile of the speaker:

Damaris Ajayi is a recipient of NAWA scholarship 2020 (now BANACH) and the EducationUSA Lagos 2020. She obtained her Bachelor's degree (First Class Honors) in Crop Protection (Plant Pathology) from the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta. Damaris is currently undergoing Polish language studies and will start studying Plant Biotechnology / Seed Technology at the Poznań University of Life Sciences by October 2021. Her research interest is particularly on Plant-Microbe Interaction (Mycology) on the genomic level and seeds..

Moderator: Scholar Hussein

Transmission Crew:

ISF > Scholars Justin, Hussein, AbdulMutolib, Oluwatobi, Paulotimi, Rasheed.

ASF > Scholars Hydrospecs, Paulotimi.

ISFM > Scholar Hussein

Foremost Research Groups > Scholar Hydrospecs.

Twitter > Scholar Lukgaf.

Telegram > Scholar Etubi ([Telegram Chat Link](#))

Admin: Researcher Bankole & ISFM Scholar Obasekore Hameed

## Lecture Agenda

## Introduction to Banach Scholarship. (Scholar Kay)?

I have with me great scholar Damaris and we'd be putting you through some things as regards the ongoing NAWA Scholarship. Good Evening great Scholars and thanks for coming. I hope we'd record ground-breaking testimonies at the end of the day.

1. This year, the previously known scholarship programs, constituting a joint initiative of NAWA and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of Polish development aid, i.e. Stefan Banach and the Program. Ignacy Łukasiewicz, are combined into one program constituting a scholarship offer for young people from developing countries planning to study in Poland. So, don't be confused as regards the changed name
2. Our goal remains one thing...to secure the scholarship at the end of the day . our goal remains one thing...to secure the scholarship at the end of the day. Few things were changed in this year NAWA Scholarship and I believed the smartness in us would have noticed this on the first day it was launched. Sequel to the lecture held for this same scholarship last, I believed most of us would have gone through the transcript of the lectures as it would do you a lot of good.
3. I invite my fellow Scholar Damaris to enlighten us on what's required of us to write a ground-breaking and compelling recommendation letter.

## Scholarship Application Documents. Writing a compelling recommendation letter. (Scholar Kay's view & Scholar Damaris' view)

- Hello everyone. Thanks for having me here. As we all know, there has been some information from the scholarship body on what is expected from your recommendation letter. Please adhere to this
- Academic Character: This should have your field of study, your grade, who you look up to in your field of study (optional), why you are in this field, what you have achieved and what you hope to get.
- Research experiences: This should entail the topic of your undergraduate project and a little summary, what you achieved (your objectives) and if you have other research experience; what position did you hold maybe as research assistant or research article writer. What role you played in such researches.
- Please state if you have a publication, put in the name of the Journal to show you know what you are saying.
- Interest in Second cycle studies: This is why you want to go in for your Masters degree. Show quality enthusiasm.
- Leadership Qualities: This is more than you been a leader of your research team or practical groups back then in school. This is how you have been able to overcome challenges, that are realistic (No fabricating please) and how you worked with people, with your supervisors.
- Your recommender is expected to have a somewhat close relationship with you. So your life outside Academics should not be a problem for him to recommend.
- So I will recommend you write this yourself and give to him to read through and sign up.
- Abilities outside Academic: Your skills, any position held in school, participation in sports.
- Your recommendation letter should have qualities that makes you stand out. Most petty recommendation letter are always full of " he is polite, he comes early to school". Those are definitely not needed here
- I will like to chip this in:
- Your recommendation letter is replacing the "research proposal" that had been used before. This shows more effort has to be put in place.
- The status of the person signing your letter is as important as the content of the letter. In fact, I think the content is of more importance. It should be well written.
- **NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATION LETTER:** You submit more than one and you can have as any pages as you can write. But please note that simplicity is key. It is better to have quality in few than to have jargons in numerous pages.

- **CONTENT:** Present yourself chronologically. Let there be a sequence of your past work with what you want to do. Even if you want to move into another field, let there be a link up somewhere.
- Your fine qualities as a well-behaved person, ability to communicate, your attitude to work
- Lastly, the relevance of your Master's degree to Poland, your country. I will recommend you make your research on the innovations going on here because they asked for it (Poland). For example, in my agricultural field, you don't bring in a topic that they are not into. And you can be innovative and creative by bringing in your own ideas, linking it up with their curriculum here. They have courses that are quite different than what we know in Nigeria but your reading through curriculum helps you. Scholar Kay will go on from here.... Thanks, Thank you so much for the important points mentioned. In addition to that, I'd like to say to you this..."Don't be too aware of your grades and lose the awareness of the 40% allocated to the recommendation letter" This could be tricky as you may have a first class and still not get the scholarship. Things happen! You might be the best graduating student of your institution and may not still get it if your recommendation letter is not in your favour. Nothing to fear Just pay attention to the points Scholar Damaris mentioned Remember, your grade is currently a constant factor which may never experience any change, but your recommendation letter could still be altered and structured in your favour. Now we move to the third agenda of the lecture which is application for admissions and school selection. third agenda of the lecture which is application for admissions and school selection. You're welcome Scholar Damaris.

## Application for Admission and schools selection. (Scholar Damaris)

1. Now we will be talking about Admission process and school selection. website. It was confirmed from the meeting today that the new process will be to apply for your Masters course alongside your application for the BANACH scholarship. This shows that we have to put in more effort unlike previous mode of application. In Poland, most of the schools usually have their admission process twice in a year; Summer Cycle (February) and Winter Cycle (October) while some will have just once in a year. So presently most schools have their admission going on. All this information is well written on their website. There is a website to find schools in Poland with different courses. Please make sure to check for ENGLISH TAUGHT courses. Here it is: [study.gov.pl](https://study.gov.pl) For Agricultural Sciences and Food Sciences:
2. Most of the universities start their sessions in OCTOBER. They open their admission portals around this time of the year (March, April, May, June, July). So, you are quite lucky to still find schools to apply into. Please try as much as possible to check on this website.

Here are a few of some Universities in this field:

- I. Poznań University of Life Sciences (Application is closing end of this month)
- II. University of Agriculture, Kraków (Starting June 1st)
- III. University of Silesia (Started May 15)
- IV. Adam Mickiewicz University (June)
- V. Jagiellonia University, Kraków (application is still on)

Please check for other schools and confirm their dates of admission.

3. For Engineering courses and other courses: I will recommend you search for schools that still have their winter cycle admission going on. Different courses with different admission dates. All this information is written on the school websites. Thank you all Additional, I'm sorry because some extra cash would be spent this time...I mean application fee to these Universities you'd be looking at.
4. I recommend you apply to at least 3 Universities.
5. .and don't try to apply to a program that is outside the domain of your field, you will surely be rejected!

6. Remember, you paid for it!
7. Hence, choose wisely and be sure the program website says they are recruiting for that cycle before you commence the filling of forms.
8. You may reach out to some of us here and we can help give out phone calls to the department and make enquiries on your behalf...but pls, try via email first before you tell us to give phone calls....
9. documents as requested by your university: most times this include; motivation letters, reference letters and work experience forms/CV. We are all busy right?? Right
10. It's time for Q&A, let it rain.

## Questions & Answers

<b>Q:</b> Just a clarification, we are to apply to the school, the same time we are applying for the scholarship??	<b>A:</b> Yes, that's right This is because if you choose English path, you can easily resume your studies in Poland upon getting the scholarship. Don't forget authentication or results in Abuja and legalisation of your certificate at the Polish embassy. Yes please. You are to apply alongside your application for the scholarship. You go onto the website of school and apply
<b>Q:</b> Thank you for all the information given. Please can we apply for application fee waivers?	<b>A:</b> Nothing is impossible, but most polish schools don't offer a waiver
<b>Q:</b> An a final year student apply? please say something about statement of purpose.	<b>A:</b> That's very much possible. The only challenge may come from the school of your choice if you're required to upload your first degree certificate. That's a boom You can apply but you must have finished and gotten your certificate and transcript before the deadline of application
<b>Q:</b> I have 3 questions (1) The specifications of the certificate is not matching what most schools in Nigeria issued out, do we go ahead to send the certificate like that? (2) I read that only graduates of 2019 and above are eligible. I have a certificate that was dated 2019 but the transcript read that my final session was 2017/2018. How do we go about that. (3) The reference letter can be send it on behalf of our recommender or our recommender will be the one to send it?	<b>A:</b> 1. Question one is unclear to me. 2 What kinda mixup is that In this case, you're left with no choice other than to submit them like that. According to Ilia, still go on with your application, put all your documents and they will analyse it individually. Pray for grace this time 3. The recommendation could be attached while filling forms. You will be the one to upload the recommendation letter.
<b>Q:</b> Having that we are selecting the specific school and intended course of study in the NAWA application form, if we eventually secure admission outside the selected school in this form, how will NAWA consider with this?	<b>A:</b> If you secure an admission outside the selected school, no worries..it's all good. Just ensure it's within your field of study. Else, NAWA wouldn't fund it You can still use it. You cannot go back to your school to give a different format of certificate. Your transcript is there to give them that information
<b>Q:</b> Can a lecturer, using the letter head of my Department, provide recommendation letter to me since he/she is in a position to tell more about me?	<b>A:</b> Yes. There is a channel of information with NAWA and the schools. You make sure you get admission into a school and have your admission letter with you.



This will go a long way with your scholarship. Also, always communicate your admission progress with Ilia, if this will assure you better. yes, a lecturer can write for you. For number 3. You should put in there. Your propose course and school.

**Q:** We get to know to choose one school during the application, what happens when the school we chose doesn't give us admission but another does?  
**A:** This is a good question. I feel you may be required to upload a decision if you have any at some point. However, this isn't a problem if you have the scholarship and you eventually secure just one admission outta all.

**Q:** From one of the schools, o saw a requirement for a health insurance proof, how do I get that  
**A:** Health insurance is expensive o. I will recommend you Flee and check for another school.

**Q:** 1. It was stated that a recommendation letter from the embassy carries more weight? How is this possible since the embassy knows nothing about us?  
**A:** I recommend you take your recommendation letter from your faculty member.

**Q:** Does the scholarship cover only courses starting in October?  
**A:** It covers for both cycles

**Q:** When does the NAWA program begin?  
**A:** It begins immediately a semester starts...mostly October and February. NAWA decision comes out mostly August. So you have between August and October to process your visa.

**Q:** What is the duration of the NAWA Master's Program?  
**A:** It covers the duration of your studies, but never fail any course. Else you'd be the one to pay for it after some time. . It depends on your course. One and half years and there are those of 2 years.

**Q:** About the recommendation letter, if gotten from one's university, can it be from a professor or an administrative staff like the registrar?  
**A:** It could be from your Professor. It is better gotten from a professor that can speak well about your academic work.  
 4. Looking at my experience with the Poland

**Q:** If we intend to get recommendation letter from the Poland Embassy in Nigeria, is it advisable to request such letter without having any established relationship with them?  
**A:** How do you even want to go about this? You can't tell embassy what to say about you...except if you wanna make your institution send you to them, but i think this isn't a good idea. embassy, I will say it is better you stick to university and NGOs.

**Q:** From the 'interest in second cycle studies' section of the LOR, does it mean your recommender will state why you want to go in for your masters? Because its quite strange, normally I thought its the student that states this in their SOP.  
**A:** Yes, that's right. It needs to be stated in there.  
 Yeah, this information should reflect in the letter.

**Q:** I graduated 2018, am I eligible to apply? cus on the form, I saw something like degree obtained not earlier than 2019.  
**A:** I'm sorry, you can't!  
 Not earlier than 2019.

**Q:** Anything I need to know about university of wroclaw?, I was interested in their masters in data science programme; there's no fees to be paid. Kindly anyone to elaborate on this.  
**A:** If it's stated that it's an application free, then nothing stops you from application...perhaps you meant tuition free.

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| <b>Q:</b> Please have been trying to access the website for the past 3 days now and it's showing access denial what's wrong with the NAWA website?   | <b>A:</b> You can use your system or try another browser. Refresh and keep trying it again                  |
| <b>Q:</b> Are we to legalize our certificate and upload for application or the legalization comes after application?                                 | <b>A:</b> Legalization comes after you have secured the scholarship   |
| <b>Q:</b> Since a letter of recommendation from the Polish embassy carries more weight so how do I get one since the embassy knows nothing about me? | <b>A:</b> Nothing is impossible, you can try sending them an email but please get one from your university. |
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