

Ministry of Higher Education and Highways
University Grants Commission

**Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and
Development (AHEAD)**

Results Area Two:
Improve the Quality of Higher Education

Human Resource Development (HRD)

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME FOR PHDs

GUIDELINES FOR UNIVERSITIES, CAMPUSES & INSTITUTES

July 2018



ABBREVIATIONS

AHEAD	Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development
ELTU	English Language Teaching Unit
HEI	Higher Education Institute
HRD	Human Resource Development
MHEH	Ministry of Higher Education and Highways
OMST	Operation and Monitoring Support Team
OTS	Operations Technical Secretariat
SDC	Staff Development Centre
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UGC	University Grants Commission

Annex 2: Instructions for Applicants

Human Resource Development Plan - AHEAD Scholarships for PhD/ MPhil degrees for University Academic Staff

INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS

1. INTRODUCTION

AHEAD project offers both full and split site PhD scholarships with 35% being offered to STEM faculties and 65% being offered to HEMS faculties. Probationary Lecturers, Lecturers and Senior Lecturers below 40 years of age will be eligible for the scholarships.

2. KEY FEATURES OF THE SCHOLARSHIPS

1. PhDs should be followed on a full time basis. The candidates should be on full time leave from the Home University.
2. All PhD programs are expected to be done in English medium (unless under exceptional circumstances) on full time leave,
3. Split-site PhD program candidates should avoid registering with the same university in which they are employed in, with exceptions granted under special circumstances (e.g. disciplines where only one Department or Faculty is available in Sri Lanka or where the Faculties/Universities have existing MOUs with foreign universities for Split- site PhD opportunities for staff),
4. Split-site PhD program candidate should have two research supervisors, one each from the local university and the overseas university,
5. Split-site PhD program candidate should visit the overseas/trainer university at least in two instances, where the total time period spent in the overseas university should exceed 12 months (this condition can vary depending on the provisions of the MOU or the university requirements of the Split-site program)
6. We strongly encourage prospective candidates to use existing agreements (MOUs) with foreign universities (arrived by Faculties/Universities or UGC) in selecting PhD opportunities.

3. MAXIMUM GRANT PER CANDIDATE

1. Under a maximum allocation of LKR 9 million for a candidate, the grant amount will depend on factors such as whether it is a full or split site program, living cost of the country, and registration/course fee of the program, etc.
2. Individuals winning the grant for a full time PhDs will receive the program registration fees and cost of living allowances/monthly allowance for the a maximum of three years as well as any other research expenses incurred.
3. Individuals winning the grant for split-site PhDs will receive the program registration fees and cost of living allowances/monthly allowance for the time period he/she will be studying abroad for the a maximum of three years as well as any other research expenses incurred.
4. Universities/candidates are encouraged to explore the possibilities of scholarships in good countries/universities where the registration/course fee as well as cost of living is low.

4. ELIGIBILITY

The Scholarships will be available to Probationary Lecturers, Lecturers and Senior Lecturers of Universities, Campuses and Undergraduate Institutes without PhD qualifications, subject to the following eligibility criteria:

1. The Candidate should be less than 40 years of age to the date of closing of applications.
2. The Candidate should be a permanent member of the academic staff.
3. The Candidate should be entitled for full time leave for the entire period of PhD.
4. The Candidate should have obtained IELTS minimum score 7.0 or equivalent at the time of commencement of training.
5. Acceptable level of communication with the university/HEI related to the registration/placement for the intended program (e.g. a letter/email of a possible placement, acceptance of a proposal or other similar communication from the overseas university).
6. The Candidate should fulfill the eligibility requirement of the Trainer University

5. APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Candidates will make their applications to the OMST with the recommendation of the university/institution where the candidate is employed. The following documents should be submitted together with the application form
 - i. Registration letter/placement letter or other forms of acceptable level of communication with the intended university/HEI (e.g. a letter/email of a possible placement, acceptance of a proposal or other similar communication from the overseas university)
 - ii. A well written research proposal (approximately 2000 words)
 - iii. A letter issued by the University/HEI where the applicant is employed at certifying the availability of study leave
 - iv. Details of two referees who can provide academic references written in English.
 - v. Documentary evidence for the relevant course fees payable to the intended postgraduate programme
 - vi. A declaration of other sources of funding available for the intended study programme by way of scholarships partial funding, tuition waivers, living stipend etc. by the applicant (any subsequent funding secured by the candidate should be declared to the UGC immediately by the candidate)
 - vii. A record of research and publication by the candidate.
 - viii. Certified copies of IELTS results sheet.
 - ix. Credential of his/her prospective supervisors in terms of qualifications and research publications.
1. Panel appointed by the OMST shall carry out the selection based on the selection criteria given in table 6.1. The panel will peruse all the documents submitted by each candidate including research proposals and will call the candidate for an interview before making its recommendation.
2. The panel shall also ensure that the selections have been made to universities and undergraduate institutes on an equitable basis and that gender equity is maintained.
3. OMST will notify the award of scholarships to the respective University with copy to selected candidates
4. The marks thus allocated and the decision made should be fair and transparent and made available for all candidates to see.

5. If the candidates wish to contest the decision of the committee, an appeal can be made to the UGC Chairperson.

6. AWARD OF SCHOLARSHIPS

1. The award of scholarships shall be notified to the selected candidates, the Vice Chancellor and the relevant Dean of the Faculty/Rector of Campus/Director of Institute of the respective University by the OMST.
2. The candidate shall find a placement/register for the stipulated PhD programme at a University as per the given instructions obtain an IELTS score of 7.0, within a maximum period of 6 months.
3. Failure by the Candidate to secure a placement within 6 months and obtain an IELTS score of 7.0 shall result in the transfer of the scholarship to the reserve candidate.

7. RELEASE OF FUNDS

1. The registration and tuition fees will be released according to the rules and regulations of the Trainer University.
2. The university will release the living allowance to the scholarship holder biannually, upon the progress of the candidate.
3. For the foreign training component of the split-site PhD program, the scholarship holder may utilize the provision of airfare from the University Grants Commission.
4. Prior to the release of first installment of the grant, the following documents needs to be submitted to the OTS of the Home University and OMST.
 - i. Placement letter/registration letter with the registration payment information
 - ii. A certificate from the Vice Chancellor of the university or head of the HEI where the applicant is currently employed whether the applicant has secured any funding in the form of scholarships, tuition waivers, partial funding, research support, and living stipend etc. from the university/HIE at which applicant is employed or any other local or foreign organization. If such funding is available the amount/s has/have to be disclosed with the source/s.
 - iii. An intended plan of activities in relation to his or her study programme including date of commencement and the intended date of completion. In this plan, intended activities shall be divided into six monthly periods from the date of commencement.

Candidates of split site programs should indicate the period/s planned to spend in the foreign university and locally

- iv. A personal health report endorsed by the University Medical Officer of the University at which the applicant is employed.
- v. A certified copy of the surety bond and the agreement with University/HEI including the breakdown of the bond.
- vi. A letter certifying the approval of the study leave for the intended postgraduate studies by the university/HEI at which the applicant is employed.

8. AGREEMENT AND BOND

The Candidate will sign an Agreement and bond with the Home University as per UGC Circular No. 920 of 5/2/2010. Those shall also include clauses to recover funds in case of misuse of funds and non-completion of training.

9. REPORTING

1. Documents related to the progress and the expenditure should be submitted to the OTS of the University of the scholarship holder as follows,
 - Inception report submitted within one month of the award of the grant
 - Progress report should be submitted every six months, with the recommendation of the supervisor, declaration of other sources of funding is any and the probable date of completion.
2. A Copy of the thesis should be submitted to the OTS and the OMST on completion of the degree.

10. PROGRESS MONITORING

1. The Progress will be regularly monitored by the UGC, Home University OTS and OMST.
2. If the progress is reported as unsatisfactory, after giving adequate warning, the grants will be recalled.
3. The Vice chancellor of the university will be asked to recover the grant amount and send to the OMST.

11. TIME LINE FOR APPLICATIONS:

Applications should be sent to AHEAD OMST office at 4th Floor, Rotunda Towers, No. 109, Rotunda Gardens, Colombo -03, on or before 15th September 2018.

Annex 3 - Key Steps

