The University of Edinburgh is proud to partner with the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program to offer inspiring young Africans the opportunity to study at our world-class university. The Scholars Program is evolving into much more than a tool for financial support. It is also a holistic leadership program where Scholars can bring their full selves to their learning experience.

More than a scholarship

The partnership with the Foundation strengthens the University’s long historical connection with Africa from early pioneering graduates to current teaching and research. Our educational links with Africa can be traced back to the 19th century, to the University’s first black African graduate, James Africanus Beale Horton, of Sierra Leone, who gained his MD in 1859.

The Scholars Program is a great opportunity to expand our work with alumni, partners, and other institutions in Africa to make a positive impact on these young scholars’ lives and their communities in Edinburgh and back home.
About the Scholars Program

The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at The University of Edinburgh believes that all young people, no matter their starting point in life, should have an equal chance to gain a quality education and pursue their aspirations to improve the lives of others.

In partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, the University of Edinburgh will provide full scholarships to educate and support bright, young African students with a deep, personal commitment to changing the world around them.

SOUFIA BHAM
POSTGRADUATE SCHOLAR STUDYING GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY | MAURITIUS

The Mastercard Foundation scholarship transformed how I understand transformative leadership and how it can be applied in communities here and beyond. I learned how to reflect on leadership and how to engage with the communities I serve.

As a scholar, I had the incredible opportunity to share my passion for education at the Forum on World Affairs 2016 in Switzerland as well as delivering a TEDx talk on Women & Homelessness. Through the Edinburgh Award workshops, reflection sessions and reading group, I became more aware of how I can bring about transformative change and also how I can embrace activism, entrepreneurship and creativity as part of my journey.

I learned how to reflect on leadership and how to engage with the communities I serve.
Recruitment

The program is shifting how the University engages with Africa by offering full undergraduate and postgraduate scholarships to 200 students from across the continent. Over the course of the seven-year program, we aim for 70% of our Scholars to be women.

We select students based on their academic merit, financial need, and a commitment to make change in their communities and countries on their return home. Online-distance learning postgraduate scholarships are available for Scholars from Mastercard Foundation partner institutions.

The Scholars Program values collaboration with organisations working in an African context who can identify and support future Scholars with their transition to Edinburgh and on their return home.

PORAI GWENDERE
UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLAR
STUDYING MECHANICAL ENGINEERING | ZIMBABWE

In 2014, I was offered admission into African Leadership Academy (ALA); a leadership school based in South Africa. Although it was risky and scary to further my education in a foreign country, I have never gone a day regretting the ‘risk’ I took in joining. I learned, worked and formed networks with ambitious and inspiring like-minded students from all over Africa. Not only was the diversity of backgrounds important, but that of thoughts and opinions was imperative in enriching the academy’s atmosphere. ALA equipped me with an array of skills and mindsets. These attributes have helped me to propel through my first year of studies in both the academic and extra-curricular settings at the University of Edinburgh. Enrolling into the University, after my graduation from ALA, has enabled me to be part of an even wider platform to learn, develop myself and take more risks.

Year 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>scholars</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>undergraduate</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>postgraduate</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year 2

| unique enquiries | 8,000 |
| applications | 2,400 |
| postgraduate applications | 1,600 |
| undergraduate applications | 800 |
| scholars | 26 |
Academic Life

As students of the University of Edinburgh, Scholars benefit from the world-class learning experience offered through their degree programmes. From research-led teaching and digital learning to project placements, Scholars have access to curricular and extracurricular activities that explore their academic interests and career aspirations in engaging and dynamic ways.

Complementing the support available through their academic programs, the Scholars Program helps Scholars navigate additional academic and pastoral guidance. Additionally, our Scholars are eligible to receive recognition for their engagement through the Edinburgh Award in Transformative Leadership and the credit-bearing Student-led Independently-Created Courses.

I am grateful for the opportunity to study courses outside of my discipline area such as an online course on Sustainability and Social Responsibility which revolutionised my thoughts on online learning. I had a lot of one-on-one discussions with tutors and students during online tutorials and an effective framework for further research. I found out about different departments in the University due to the contribution from diverse teaching staff that I probably would not have come across on my own.

VANESSA OMBURA
UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLAR
STUDYING CIVIL ENGINEERING | KENYA

This University attracted me because of the evident upholding of curiosity and self-inquiry in its undergraduate degree programmes. This has given me the freedom to discover, question and build on knowledge with enough assistance that gives me room to challenge myself. I am grateful for the opportunity to study courses outside of my discipline area such as an online course on Sustainability and Social Responsibility which revolutionised my thoughts on online learning. I had a lot of one-on-one discussions with tutors and students during online tutorials and an effective framework for further research. I found out about different departments in the University due to the contribution from diverse teaching staff that I probably would not have come across on my own.
The theory taught in class has to be put into practice as part of the learning experience.

ANITA OWITI
POSTGRADUATE SCHOLAR
STUDYING ENVIRONMENT & DEVELOPMENT | KENYA

Work experience is extremely important for every student. The theory taught in class has to be put into practice as part of the learning experience. In some cases, the actual practice is totally different from what we learn in class. This emphasises the need to apply the theory smartly because in the working environment, it comes through in varied angles and not as directly as it is taught. The placement helps one to clearly decipher this. The University of Edinburgh and more so MCF advocates that every student has to go through a work-based placement period where they can realise this depending on their fields of expertise. A great step in ensuring scholars get the exposure important in preparing us for future employment. I had all my assumptions written off because I had the first-hand experience. I am now more confident in my field of expertise than ever.
Making Leaders

As part of the Scholars Program, undergraduate Scholars participate in a summer school after their first and third years. Taking place in Scotland and in Africa, these summer schools aim to equip resilient and visionary transformative leaders through action led practice.

Through the summer school, Scholars are guided through an immersive learning experience to build the practical skills, mindsets, and experience necessary for transformative leadership. The syllabus is a unique blend of theoretical, mindful, reflective and active practice, built around a series of live local challenges with community partners.

KUSHMANDI SREEKISSOON
UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLAR
STUDYING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS | MAURITIUS

Being part of the summer school has been an enriching and exciting experience. Throughout this summer school, I got the opportunity to learn so much about myself; my strengths and weaknesses. At times it got scary and quite emotional because I do not think that I had ever consciously thought so much about myself. This summer school for me was a break to just pause for a while and reflect. It also taught me so much about mindfulness; how it is important for me to be present in the moment so as to make the most of every situation. Working in a diverse group has taught me so much about emotional intelligence, facilitation and communication skills, patience, and problem-solving skills.

“Working in a diverse group has taught me so much about emotional intelligence, facilitation and communication skills, patience, and problem-solving skills.”
I clearly remember the infectious energy that filled the theatre. The thoughts, zeal, laughter and voices of ambitious and enthusiastic individuals ready to change their world through social entrepreneurship left you awe-struck.

Being selected as part of the 2017 Skoll Emerging Leaders cohort was an amazing opportunity to learn from other social entrepreneurs, build great friendships, have a safe environment to be vulnerable as well as hone my skills.

I had criticised world institutions with colleagues all semester; almost leaving us faint-hearted about the task ahead.

Growing up, one of my many fantasies was meeting a member of the British Royal Family. Being an MCF scholar at the University of Edinburgh made this a reality, far beyond my expectations. It was an honour to be one of four students within the University to attend The Chancellor’s Reception; a gathering of major donors to hear about the University’s progress, growth and impact. The University’s Chancellor; Anne, Princess Royal, graced the occasion.

I was privileged to share my university experience as an MCF scholar with her and the donors at such a thrilling and memorable event. Being able to learn to network in such an environment helped me improve my communication and networking skills.

I have always enjoyed talking about religion, culture and traditions. Being a part of the Arab International Day allowed me to present a proper image of my country, Sudan, that the media fails to portray. People only know about the conflict and the political tension in Sudan. Very few know about Sudan’s history, traditions, tourism, and what makes us unique. Being part of the Edinburgh Award pushed me to develop various attributes of leadership while working on the event, working on teams mainly and navigating our differences - especially discussing the difference in our views toward Sudan, and deciding what to talk about and what to present. I enjoyed organising and participating in the event, and I really enjoyed answering people’s questions about our community, and how it’s a really diverse community, being both Africans and Arabs.

I enjoy working with people of different nationalities, races, and religions to foster unity and understanding among diverse people occupying one world.

Taking part in the ‘visit my mosque’ event at the Edinburgh Central Mosque was a fulfilling experience. I teamed up with the mosque members to invite the community of Edinburgh to the mosque and talk to them about Islam and to clarify some of the misconceptions surrounding Muslims. The event inspired me so much that I hope events like this can be replicated across other parts of the world to create the safe space for dialogue among people with different beliefs and cultures.