

GUIDELINES OF THE KRISTJAN JAAK SCHOLARSHIP FOR EXCHANGE STUDIES

Guidelines for the year 2022

PURPOSE, SCOPE, RESPONSIBILITY

The purpose of the guidelines is to establish the scholarship scheme of exchange studies of the Kristjan Jaak programme, the conditions for applying for and using the scholarship, and arrangements for its payment.

The implementation of the Kristjan Jaak programme is organized by the Education and Youth Board (hereinafter the Board). The organizing involves, inter alia:

- Timely preparation and necessary coordination of the programme documentation;
- Mediation and publication of information, including the organization of information days;
- Counselling the applicants, beneficiaries and other involved parties;
- Conducting the calls for applications, including the organization of assessing and selecting the applications;
- Preparation, conclusion and termination of contracts, scholarship payments, monitoring the execution of the contracts and analysis of the reports;
- Informing the public.

The Board is guided in its activities by the objectives of the programme, the scholarship guidelines and the guidelines of the scholarship board and the Ministry of Education and Research.

The compiling and improving of the given guidelines and the awarding of scholarships is coordinated by the Scholarships and Grants Office of the Board.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

THE PURPOSE AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

1. The scholarship supports exchange studies at a recognized foreign university or research institution¹ at master's and PhD level (hereinafter as exchange studies). The exchange studies can last from 31 days to 12 months.
2. Exchange studies contribute to improving the awareness of master's and PhD students about different study and research practices. It also facilitates their participation in international research projects and develops their ability to work in an international working environment.
3. Scholarship for exchange studies can be used for up to 12 months per educational level.
4. The scholarship will be awarded for students of integrated curricula as well as for master's and PhD students of Estonian higher education institutions who wish to complete a part of their studies abroad

¹ Research institutions are institutions and legal persons whose main activity is research. The Board has the right to ask the applicant for additional documents regarding the main activity of the host institution.

5. The scholarship may be used for participating in tuition and internships (the internship must be a part of the curriculum of the sending university). The scholarship may also be used to support lab work if it is coordinated by a supervisor at the host institution. PhD students may also use the scholarship for individual work, field work and consultations.
6. The studies must take place from 1 July of the application year until 30 September of the following year. During the exchange studies active tuition in the host institution must take place.
7. The Kristjan Jaak scholarship for exchange studies cannot be used to finance exchange studies that take place within the framework of programmes that are coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Research or the Education and Youth Board.
8. Awarding the scholarship shall be determined by the Kristjan Jaak Programme Board appointed by order No. 1.1-2/19/297 of 28 October 2019 of the Minister of Education and Research (hereinafter the Programme Board).

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BENEFICIARY

9. The scholarship can be applied for by persons who are:
 - Master's or PhD students of Estonian higher education institutions.
 - Students of integrated curricula of Estonian higher education institutions, who have completed at least 180 ECTS of their curriculum by the time of submitting the application.
10. The applicant's Estonian language knowledge must be at least on a B1 level.
11. The applicant must be a master's, PhD or integrated curriculum student at an Estonian higher education institution while applying for and using the scholarship.
12. The scholarship can be used a maximum of two times per educational level, considering that the minimum duration of one study period is 31 days and the scholarship can be applied for a maximum of 12 months in total.
13. The beneficiary must continue their studies in their current higher education institution in Estonia after completing their studies abroad.

AMOUNT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

14. The amount of the scholarship is calculated based on unit prices for travel and living expenses. The tuition fee can be covered based on actual costs in the amount of up to 5000 euros.
15. Unit prices that are used when calculating the scholarship amount are confirmed by the regulation of the Minister for Education and Research.
16. The travel expenses can be reimbursed for travelling from the point of departure to the destination (to the location of the host institution) and back. When granting the scholarship, the start and end point of the round trip is considered to be the same city. It is not possible to receive the scholarship for a one-way trip. The scholarship can fund trips starting both from Estonia and abroad. The travel expenses can be reimbursed for a maximum of two times (2 round trips a year).

- 16.1. The amount of the reimbursed travel expenses depends on the distance between the point of departure and the destination. When calculating the distance, the European Commission's web-based calculator is used:
http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/tools/distance_en.htm.
- 16.2. If the distance between the point of departure and the destination is up to 99,99 km (included), the travel expenses shall be reimbursed in the amount of up to 180 euros based on expense receipts.
- 16.3. If the distance between the point of departure and the destination is 100,00 km or more, the travel expenses shall be reimbursed based on fixed price based on the rates in the following table:

	Distance from city to city (one direction) ²	Travel grant for a round trip
1	100 - 499 km	180 euros
2	500 - 1999 km	275 euros
3	2000 - 2999 km	360 euros
4	3000 - 3999 km	530 euros
5	4000 - 7999 km	820 euros
6	8000 or more km	1100 euros

- 16.4. The travel expenses that are covered based on unit prices include all travel-related costs, including transportation to airport and from airport to the destination. Visa costs shall not be reimbursed.
17. The subsistence grant shall cover the beneficiary's accommodation and living expenses.
18. The subsistence grant that is meant to cover the living expenses is paid for up to 12 months.
19. The unit price of the subsistence grant is set for one calendar day. The total amount of the subsistence grant is calculated based on the length of the exchange studies as stipulated in the scholarship contract. The beneficiary must stay at the host institution during the scholarship period (except for the winter and spring breaks).
20. If the applicant wishes the tuition fee to be covered, they must explain it in the application. It is not possible to apply for the reimbursement of the tuition fee after the scholarship decisions have been confirmed.
21. The Board may adjust the amount of the applied grant if the amount in the application differs from the amount calculated based on unit prices.
22. The amount of the scholarship approved by the Programme Board cannot be increased.

² If the calculated distance falls in the range of 499-500 km, 1999-2000 km, etc., the result will be rounded to the whole number prior to the determination of the unit price.

APPLICATION DEADLINES

23. Scholarship applications are accepted twice a year: on May 1 and October 15.
24. The application with the required documents must be submitted no later than by the announced deadline. In the call for applications of May 1, the scholarship period cannot start earlier than July 1. In the call for application of October 15, the scholarship period cannot start earlier than October 1.

APPLICATION

25. The application with all the required annexes must be submitted through the application system taotlused.edu.ee. The call for applications opens one month before the deadline.
26. The applicant must submit the following documents before the application deadline:
 - An application form containing general information about the applicant as well as a motivation letter (2000-4000 characters³);
 - A work plan for the exchange studies (3400-10200 characters);
 - A signed recommendation letter from the thesis supervisor or a significant lecturer;
 - A confirmation letter about studying at the Estonian higher education institution issued by that institution during the current semester. Students of integrated curricula must also submit a document that proves that they have completed at least 180 ECTS of their curriculum.
 - A confirmation from the host institution that shows that they accept the applicant during the period indicated in the application or a confirmation from the home university about being nominated for exchange studies.
 - Document proving Estonian citizenship (a copy of passport or ID-card) or a document proving that the applicant's Estonian language knowledge is at least on a B1 level (a certificate of a language proficiency exam, a certificate of completion of a language course at a licenced institution or a transcript of records from the university).
 - Document showing the amount of the tuition fee (if the applicant wishes to apply for the reimbursement of the participation fee).
27. The Board has the right to check the correspondence of the uploaded documents to the originals.
28. The scholarship may not be applied for to finance exchange studies that take place within the framework of programmes that are coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Research or the Education and Youth Board (incl. Erasmus Plus, Nordplus, Dora Plus, scholarships of foreign countries).
29. If the exchange studies take place within the framework of the programmes indicated in section 28, the Kristjan Jaak exchange studies scholarship may not be applied for even if the student waives the scholarship offered by those programmes.

³ The number of characters includes spaces.

30. If, in addition to the Kristjan Jaak exchange studies scholarship, the applicant has applied for additional scholarships that are not mentioned in section 28, they must indicate it in the application. If the host institution offers free accommodation, it has to be also indicated in the application.

BASIS OF SELECTION

31. The applications which meet the criteria are assessed by sectoral experts. Each application is evaluated by at least two experts. The maximal possible score awarded by one expert for various aspects of the application is 30 points. A ranking list of applicants is compiled based on the aggregate score awarded by the experts. This list is the basis for the decision made by the Programme Board. If the summarized score given by two experts differs by 8 points or more, a third expert will assess the application. In this case, the two scores that are closest to each other will be considered when compiling the ranking list. If the score given by the third expert falls in the middle of the two previous experts' scores, then the ranking list will be compiled based on double the average of the scores.
32. Experts evaluate the applications based on the following aspects:
- Is the goal of the exchange studies clear and convincingly reasoned?
 - Is the applicant motivated and has worked on the application thoroughly?
 - Is the work plan well elaborated, reasonable and achievable?
 - How well does the chosen foreign institution suit for studying in this field?
 - Is the letter of recommendation relevant and convincing?
 - What is the added value for Estonia arising from this exchange studies?
33. The Programme Board allocates the scholarships based on the aggregate scores given by the experts. It is within the Programme Board's discretion to decide which applications should be supported. If there are several applications with an equal score, but the budget does not allow to support all of them, the Programme Board may prefer the applications from fields and higher education institutions that are less represented. The decision to allocate scholarships is fixed in the minutes of the Programme Board's meeting and confirmed with the decision of the Director for Internationalization of the Board.
34. The assessment procedure takes up to two months from the date of the announced application deadline.

SIGNING THE CONTRACT AND PAYING THE SCHOLARSHIP

35. Before signing the contract, the beneficiary must submit a confirmation of acceptance from the host institution (if such a document has not already been submitted together with the application).
36. The Board shall conclude the contract with the beneficiary generally one month before the start of the studies. The contract stipulates the amount and conditions of using the scholarship.
37. The scholarship will be paid out for 3 months at a time.

38. The first instalment, which includes the subsistence grant for the first 3 tuition months as well as a travel grant for one round trip, shall be paid out no later than 2 weeks before the start of the exchange studies, but not before the scholarship contract has been signed.
39. The following instalments will be paid out after the beneficiary has submitted a certificate of attendance for the scholarship period issued by the host institution. These certificates shall be sent to the Board by e-mail. If the beneficiary has been allocated a travel grant for 2 round trips, the grant for the second round trip will be paid out after the interim report has been submitted (see section 45 of the Guidelines).
40. The beneficiary has the right to apply for a short study visit scholarship (Dora Plus 1.1 scholarship or Kristjan Jaak short study visit scholarship) during their exchange studies. In that case, the destination country of the short study visit must be different from the destination country of the exchange studies. The subsistence grant of the exchange study scholarship and the short study visit scholarship are not paid simultaneously. If the beneficiary is awarded a short study visit scholarship, an annex to the exchange studies scholarship contract is signed that stipulates the suspension of the subsistence grant. The subsistence grant of the exchange studies scholarship for the period covered by the short study visit scholarship must be repaid to the Board.
41. Advance payments of the scholarship shall not be made to individuals who have outstanding contractual obligations to the Board.
42. In documents and presentations related to the study visit, the beneficiary shall acknowledge the support of the Ministry of Education and Research, the Kristjan Jaak programme and the Board.

REPORTING

43. All beneficiaries must submit a scholarship report within one month after the end of the exchange studies. The report is submitted electronically in the application system.
44. The report includes:
 - A completed report form (available in the application system after the contract has been signed).
 - A dated confirmation letter from the host institution about studying there during the scholarship period.
 - An overview of the work done (500-1500 words) with the signature of the foreign supervisor or a transcript of records from the host university (mandatory if the purpose of the exchange studies was participation in coursework). The overview / transcript of records must show how the objectives outlined in the work plan have been achieved.
45. If the study period abroad lasts 7 months or longer, an interim report must be submitted after 6 months. The deadline for submitting the interim report is set out in the scholarship contract. The interim report and its annexes shall be sent to the Board by email. The interim report includes a brief summary in free-form about the activities abroad (500-1500 words) and a

confirmation from the foreign institution (or the supervisor) about participating in course work during the scholarship period.

46. The Board has the right to check the correspondence of the submitted documents to the originals.
47. If the report or the confirmation letter is not submitted in time or if it transpires that the scholarship has not been used purposefully or if the final length of the exchange studies was shorter than stipulated in the scholarship contract, the beneficiary must (partially) pay back the scholarship unless the contractual obligations couldn't be fulfilled due to health-related, family-related or other circumstances beyond the beneficiary's control.

DOCUMENTATION

48. The Board preserves the documents and data related to the Kristjan Jaak programme for a specified time in accordance with the document management regulations of the Board. The Board does not preserve the documents sent by the applicants and beneficiaries which are not required in these guidelines.

MANDATE OF THE BOARD'S EMPLOYEES

49. The programme officer of the Scholarships and Grants Office verifies if the submitted application documents meet the technical criteria. The programme officer will inform the applicant in written form within 5 working days if their application meets the criteria or if there are any shortcomings. The programme officer may ask for additional documents to verify if the submitted documents correspond to originals. If the application does not meet the criteria, it will not be sent for evaluation and the programme officer will inform the applicant in written form within 10 working days.
50. The Board's decision about the allocation of the scholarship will be communicated to the applicant in written form by the programme officer within 60 days from the application deadline.

PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA

51. The Board processes the personal data related to the Kristjan Jaak programme based on the consent given by the applicant and in accordance with legislation and the data protection rules of the Board. The data protection rules of the Board can be found on the Board's website.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

52. The list of the recipients the Kristjan Jaak scholarship will be published on the Board's webpage.

DATE OF ENFORCEMENT OF GUIDELINES

53. The Guidelines will be applied from the application round of 01 May 2022.