

Conditions and Procedures for Granting the Scholarship

For the funding of Academic Foreign Studies of Estonian Language and Culture (EKKAV) Program's Estophilus Scholarship

OBJECTIVE AND PRINCIPLES OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

1. The objective of the scholarship is to support research and studies of foreign universities' researchers and students interested in Estonian language and culture, thereby contributing to knowledge exchange and making Estonia more visible. As a result, the number of students interested in Estonian language and culture, as well as studies related to Estonia, increases.
2. The budget allocated for the EKKAV program is established by the Minister of Education and Research through a ministry order.
3. The administration of the scholarship is carried out by the Education and Youth Board (hereinafter referred to as the board) through the following activities:
 - 3.1. advising applicants, scholarship recipients, and other stakeholders;
 - 3.2. forming an evaluation commission and establishing its procedure;
 - 3.3. conducting application rounds, including evaluation and selection of applications;
 - 3.4. organizing the disbursement of scholarships, monitoring compliance with obligations, and overseeing reporting;
 - 3.5. handling appeals;
 - 3.6. organizing program-related informational activities.

SCHOLARSHIP CONDITIONS

GENERAL CONDITIONS

4. The scholarship may be applied for by citizens of foreign countries who are final-year undergraduate students, master's students, doctoral students, and researchers with a doctoral degree from foreign higher education institutions.
5. The applicant's research topic must concern the Estonian language and/or culture, and the applicant must be present in Estonia during the period of research writing and/or collection of necessary material.

6. Proficiency in the Estonian language is advantageous but not mandatory for applying for the scholarship.
7. The applicant must be the end user of the scholarship.
8. The scholarship may be awarded for a period of up to five months, except for undergraduate students, for whom the scholarship may be awarded for up to two months.
9. The scholarship period is the duration of the recipient's stay in Estonia while conducting their research. The scholarship may be awarded to applicants whose duration of one scholarship period is at least 30 days. The scholarship period cannot commence before the decision specified in point 32.
10. The amount of the scholarship is determined based on the duration of the recipient's stay in Estonia. Any absence from Estonia during the scholarship period must be coordinated with the board.
11. The scholarship recipient has the option to divide the scholarship period into two parts if dividing the period is necessary for research or study purposes. For example, for a three-month period, it is possible to split it between different semesters (e.g., 60 days in autumn and 30 days in spring). In the case of multiple stays in Estonia, the scholarship periods are summed up.
12. The scholarship applicant must have an agreement regarding supervision with a researcher or staff member of an Estonian research or educational institution who holds a scientific degree and has the competence to supervise the recipient's research during their stay in Estonia.
13. The activities indicated in the application must be carried out within one calendar year from the date of the decision to grant the application.

COMPONENTS OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

14. 14. The scholarship consists of the following components:
 - 14.1. Accommodation allowance;
 - 14.2. Travel allowance.
15. The size of the scholarship is calculated based on the unit cost of travel and living expenses.
16. Accommodation allowance:
 - 16.1. The scholarship is paid for studying and conducting research in Estonia; additional costs (such as visa expenses, etc.) are not covered;
 - 16.2. The living cost portion of the scholarship amounts to 660 euros per calendar month for all recipients.
17. Travel allowance:
 - 17.1. The travel cost portion of the scholarship is paid once during the scholarship period, regardless of whether the recipient stays continuously in Estonia for the entire period or if it is divided into several parts.

17.2. The amount of the travel cost portion of the scholarship depends on the distance between the place of departure and the destination. The distance is calculated using only the online calculator of the European Commission at http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/tools/distance_en.htm.

17.3. The rates for the travel cost portion of the scholarship are as follows:

	Distance between cities (one way) ¹	The part of travel costs of the scholarship per scholarship period (from the place of departure to the destination and back).
1	Up to 99.9 km	70 euros
2	100 – 499 km	180 euros
3	500 – 1999 km	275 euros
4	2000 – 2999 km	360 euros
5	3000 – 3999 km	530 euros
6	4000 – 7999 km	820 euros
7	8000 and more km	1500 euros

18. Other funding sources are allowed to cover expenses incurred during the scholarship period if the rules of those other sources permit it. Receiving additional funding must be noted in the application.

APPLYING FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP

19. Applications are accepted twice a year in accordance with the work plan and deadlines approved by the EKKAV program's council and by the board. The conditions and deadlines for submitting applications are made public on the website of the Education and Youth Board.

20. By the deadline, the applicant must submit the following documents to the board:

20.1. Application, including a motivational letter;

20.2. Research plan;

20.3. Curriculum vitae;

20.4. Proof that the applicant is a final-year bachelor's student, master's student, doctoral student, or a document confirming the doctoral degree;

20.5. Confirmation from the Estonian supervisor of the scholarship recipient indicating their willingness to accept the candidate and provide guidance during their stay in Estonia. In the confirmation letter in Estonian, the host must briefly describe the research topic and justify the importance of the research for Estonia.

21. Only applications received on time will be sent for evaluation.

22. The board verifies compliance with the application document requirements (technical check) and informs applicants in a form that allows reproduction in writing within 5 working days regarding compliance or deficiencies in the application. If the application does not meet the requirements, it will not be sent to the evaluation committee, and the board will notify the applicant within 10 working days in a form that allows reproduction in writing.

¹ If the distance calculated falls within the range of 499-500 km, 1999-2000 km, etc., the calculated result is rounded to the nearest whole number for determining the unit price.

EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS AND SELECTION

23. A three-member evaluation committee, formed separately for each application round from the council members, assesses eligible applications. The members of the evaluation committee are generally confirmed by the board based on the proposal of the EKKAV program's council one month before the application deadline.
24. All applicants compete in the same category.
25. When making selections, the evaluation committee considers the following criteria:
 - 25.1. Clear research objectives, thoroughness of the work plan (15 points);
 - 25.2. Relevance to Estonian topics (15 points);
 - 25.3. Expected results (10 points);
 - 25.4. Connection of the study visit to the applicant's scientific work and its importance in the completion of the research (10 points);
 - 25.5. Justification for conducting the research at the chosen institution in Estonia and the relevance of the recommendation letter (10 points);
 - 25.6. Overall quality of the application (10 points).
26. In case of equal points, the evaluation committee has the right to:
 - 26.1. Prefer applicants studying or working in an EKKAV program location (educational institution where a lecturer has been sent through the program) and candidates who have not previously been awarded the Estophilus scholarship;
 - 26.2. Prefer, in the case of bachelor's and master's degree applications, students who have chosen a thesis topic and have a supervisor;
 - 26.3. Prefer candidates with proficiency in the Estonian language.
27. If it is not possible to satisfy all applications within the budget for the application round and there are applications with equal points below the budget limit, funding is based on the following principles:
 - 27.1. First preference is given to applicants who have previously completed or are currently completing studies in Estonian language and culture;
 - 27.2. Subsequently, preference is given to applications with the longest specified stay in Estonia;
 - 27.3. Then, preference is given to those applications that received higher points in the evaluation criterion 'connection of the study visit to the applicant's scientific work and importance in the completion of the research.'
28. Information about the budget allocated for the application round is provided to the evaluation committee by the board before the evaluation of applications.
29. Based on the evaluation, the evaluation committee compiles a ranking of applications and submits a proposal for the allocation of scholarships to the board.
30. The evaluation committee has the right to consult with field experts during the evaluation process.

31. Proposals for rejecting or partially funding applications are justified.
32. The evaluation procedure, including the scholarship decisions, takes up to 45 working days from the announced deadline of the application round.
33. The allocation of scholarships is confirmed by the board's decision. The decisions on scholarships are communicated to the scholarship applicants.

CONTRACT SIGNING AND REPORTING

34. Before signing the contract, the scholarship recipient must submit to the board an official invitation or confirmation letter (digitally) signed by the Estonian educational institution or research institute for acceptance (unless the said document has already been submitted with the application).
35. The board signs a contract with the scholarship recipient, stipulating the conditions for using the scholarship. The contract is usually signed one month before the start of the study visit.
36. The first installment of the scholarship (living expenses for the first month and the entire travel cost) is transferred to the scholarship recipient's account no later than 14 days before the start of the study visit, but not before the signing of the scholarship contract (advance payment). The remaining scholarship is transferred to the recipient in monthly installments. The board may also pay the scholarship for the entire period in one installment. The scholarship is tax-exempt. Payments are made in euros to an account typically opened in the eurozone.
37. The scholarship recipient is obliged to mention the Ministry of Education and Research, the Education and Youth Board, and the Estonian Language and Culture Academic Study Abroad Program (EKKAV) as supporters of their studies in relevant documents and statements.
38. Within 14 days after the end of the scholarship period, the scholarship recipient must submit a formal report and an informal confirmation letter from the Estonian supervisor regarding the activities conducted during their stay. The form, conditions, and deadlines for the report are made public on the website of the Education and Youth Board.
39. If the actual duration of the study visit is shorter than the agreed-upon study visit period in the scholarship agreement, the scholarship recipient must repay the overpaid scholarship amount to the board within 14 days from the submission of the corresponding demand by the board.
40. In the case of a shorter study visit than the duration indicated in the application, the scholarship amount to be repaid will be calculated based on the number of days spent in Estonia.
41. The scholarship may be reclaimed if the recipient does not conduct the research according to the approved work plan (except in cases of health, family, or other reasons beyond their control), does not use the scholarship for intended travel and living expenses, or fails to submit the required report. Additionally, the scholarship recipient must fully repay the scholarship amount to

the board if the study visit does not take place or if the purpose of the study visit changes without prior notification to the board.

PROCEDURE FOR INFORMING ABOUT THE USE OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

42. The board has the right to make the scholarship recipients list public on the board's website.