

Conditions and Procedures for Granting the Scholarship

For funding of the academic foreign language and culture (EKKAV) program's scholarship for Estonian language and culture summer or winter courses

OBJECTIVE AND PRINCIPLES OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

1. The objective of the scholarship is to enhance the knowledge of foreign higher education students studying Estonian language and culture, by enabling them to participate in Estonian universities' summer or winter courses with the support of the scholarship.
2. The budget allocated for the EKKAV program is determined by the Minister of Education and Research through a ministry order.
3. The awarding of scholarships is managed 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. All students and learners currently residing abroad and studying at foreign higher education institutions who are not studying in Estonia as exchange students during the application period are eligible to apply for the scholarship.
5. The applicant must be studying Estonian language and/or culture at the time of application or have previously studied Estonian.
6. The scholarship covers accommodation costs, course tuition fees, and cultural program expenses in full. Any transportation costs associated with participation in the courses are the responsibility of the applicant.

7. Information about summer or winter courses is published on the board's website.
8. In an application round, an applicant can submit an application for a scholarship for participation in one summer or winter course.
9. The scholarship recipient is provided with accommodation arranged by the university. If the applicant prefers a different type of room, they must cover the additional cost themselves. If the applicant does not wish to use the accommodation offered by the organizer of the summer or winter courses, they must arrange their own accommodation, and the cost will not be reimbursed by the scholarship. If the applicant does not need accommodation, this should be specified in the application.
10. The activities specified in the application must be completed within one calendar year from the date of the decision to grant the scholarship.

APPLYING FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP

11. Applications are accepted twice a year according to the work plan and deadlines approved by the board in coordination with EKKAV program's council. The conditions and deadlines for submitting applications are published on the Education and Youth Board's website.
12. The application must be submitted no later than the announced deadline. Applications not submitted on time will not be sent for evaluation.
13. The applicant must submit the following documents to the board by the deadline
 - 13.1. an application, including a motivational letter;
 - 13.2. a recommendation letter from the current or former Estonian language instructor;
 - 13.3. a copy of the certificate of studying at a foreign higher education institution.
14. Documents signed on paper must be submitted in scanned form. The board has the right to verify the conformity of the submitted documents to the originals.
15. In case of a lack of qualified candidates meeting the requirements, the evaluation commission has the right not to make a proposal to award the scholarship.
16. The board verifies compliance with the application requirements (technical check) and informs applicants in a form allowing written reproduction about the conformity of the application or any deficiencies within 5 working days. If the application does not meet the requirements, it will not be sent for evaluation, and the board will inform the applicant of this in a form allowing written reproduction within 10 working days.
17. The decision on the approval or rejection of the application is made no later than 45 working days from the end date of the announced application round.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

18. Three-member evaluation commissions evaluate applications meeting the requirements. The commission is formed separately for each application round from members of the EKKAV

program's council. The members of the evaluation commission are approved by the board generally 1 month before the application deadline.

19. Information about the budget allocated for the application round is provided to the evaluation commission by the board before evaluating applications.
20. Based on the evaluation, the evaluation commission compiles a ranking of applications and submits a funding proposal to the board based on a simple majority vote.
21. In making the selection, the evaluation commission takes into account the following evaluation criteria: the applicant's motivation (15 points), relevance of the recommendation letter (15 points), added value of participation in the course (10 points), overall quality of the application (10 points).
 - 21.1 An additional 1 point for each of the following criteria is awarded to applicants who:
 - have not previously participated in an Estonian summer or winter course;
 - have not previously received an EKKAV scholarship for participating in a summer or winter course;
 - are studying or have studied Estonian at one of the study locations under the EKKAV program.
 - 21.2. The assessment points are determined as the arithmetic mean of the points given by the members of the evaluation commission.
 - 21.3. If it is not possible to satisfy all applications that exceed the qualification threshold within the budget of the application round, and there are applications with equal points close to the budget limit, the scholarship recipient(s) may be selected by a simple majority vote of the evaluation commission if necessary.
 - 21.4. In the case of applicants from the same foreign higher education institution, the board's decision may also take into account the ranking of students compiled by the Estonian language instructor at the respective foreign higher education institution.
22. The evaluation commission provides justifications for the candidates who were not granted scholarships.
23. The members of the evaluation commission assess each application individually before the commission meeting.
24. The final funding proposal for applications is made to the board during the evaluation commission meeting.
25. Based on the ranking and a simple majority vote, the evaluation commission prepares a funding proposal for the board.
26. During the evaluation process, the evaluation commission has the right to consult with subject matter experts.
27. The evaluation procedure, including decisions on scholarship allocation, takes up to 45 working days from the end date of the announced application round.
28. The allocation of scholarships is confirmed by the board's decision. The board informs scholarship applicants of the decisions made.

PAYMENT OF SCHOLARSHIPS AND REPORTING

29. The board transfers the scholarship to the bank account of the university organizing the summer or winter courses to ensure a place for the scholarship recipient in the summer or winter courses. The scholarship is not transferred to the bank account of the participant in the summer or winter courses.
30. The board provides the details of the scholarship recipients to the receiving university.
31. The university organizing the summer or winter courses may, if necessary, enter into a contract with the scholarship recipients outlining the rights and obligations of both parties. Additional information about signing the contract is provided by the contact person of the university organizing the summer or winter courses, whose contact information is provided to the scholarship recipient by the board.
32. If the applicant does not secure a place in the summer or winter courses, they forfeit the right to the scholarship.
33. The board transfers the scholarship to the receiving university within 21 calendar days after signing the respective contract.
34. During the period of summer or winter course, the scholarship recipient must be in Estonia, except for cases of web-based courses. If it is discovered that the scholarship recipient has not been in Estonia during the period of scholarship disbursement, the receiving institution must refund the accommodation portion of the scholarship.
35. Changing the scholarship period after the confirmation of scholarship competition results is only possible with the written consent of the board and provided that the total amount of the scholarship does not increase.
36. The receiving university submits a report to the board regarding the used scholarships. A free-form report about activities and expenses is to be submitted to the contact person specified in the contract according to the deadline stipulated in the contract. Any remaining unused funds are to be returned to the board.
37. The decision regarding reclaiming the scholarship is made by the board.
38. Participants in summer or winter courses do not have an obligation to report to the board. If the university organizing the summer or winter courses requests a report from the scholarship recipient, the university and the scholarship recipient agree on this matter between themselves.

PROCEDURE FOR INFORMING ABOUT THE USE OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

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