



democratising access to higher education

Workshop on Commonwealth Scholarships  
24 September 2022



# Outline

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# Project EduAccess

Access to higher education is a privilege most people from marginalised communities are systematically denied through cost, information and dispositional barriers.

**Project EduAccess** is a modest attempt to improve inclusivity in HEIs by removing these barriers for marginalized communities in South Asia.

We hope to achieve this by providing expert mentorship, support and guidance to learners in South Asia.

# Meet your panelists



Banashree Thapa

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MSc Biodiversity Conservation  
Management

Commonwealth Masters 2020-21

University of Oxford



Haasini Sai Sri Gurram

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MA Education, Gender and  
International Development

Commonwealth Shared 2022-23

University College London



# Commonwealth Scholarship

- UK's primary scholarship scheme focused on supporting UK international **development goals**.
- Funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (**FCDO**).
- Supports future **change-makers** and **leaders** by funding postgraduate studies in a range of different study formats in the UK.
- Scholarship covers:
  - Tuition fees & living allowance
  - Airfare to and from the UK
  - Visa application costs
  - Thesis grant & Study Travel Grant (where applicable)
  - Warm clothing allowance



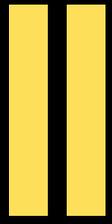
# Types of Awards

- Commonwealth **Master's** Scholarships (tenable at any UK university)
- Commonwealth **Shared** Scholarships (for select courses in partner UK universities)
- Commonwealth **PhD** Scholarships (not applicable for Indians since 2019)
- Commonwealth **Split-site** Scholarships (PhD between an Indian & UK university)
- Commonwealth **Distance Learning** Scholarships (MSc studies in the UK from India)



# Commonwealth Masters Scholarship

- Fully funded one-year Masters scholarship tenable at any University (except MBA courses)
- Supports “talented and motivated” candidates who lack the financial means to afford an education in the UK.
- Applicants must be a citizen, have been granted refugee status and/or be permanently based in a Commonwealth country
- Scholarship is awarded under **six CSC developmental themes**
- Candidates **must apply twice**: CSC and nominating agency (India)
- 39 candidates are first nominated by India in Dec- final award to 50% of those in June



# CSC Development Themes

- Theme 1: Science and technology for development
- Theme 2: Strengthening health systems and capacity
- Theme 3: Promoting Global Prosperity
- Theme 4: Strengthening global peace, security and governance
- Theme 5: Strengthening resilience and response to crises
- Theme 6: Access, inclusion and opportunity

# Eligibility

- Available to start academic studies in the UK by the start of the UK academic year in September 2023
- By September 2023, hold a **first degree** of at least **upper second class** (2:1) honours standard, or a second class degree (2:2) and a relevant postgraduate qualification\* (usually a Master's degree)
- Full transcripts detailing **all** higher education qualifications, including to-date transcripts for any courses currently being studied, with certified translations if not in English
- References from at least **two** individuals, on institutional letterhead or an email clearly showing the sender's details (for 2023, applicants need to self-upload references)

# Application process

→ Sept-mid Oct

**Online Application (CSC)**

- Choice of University/course
- References (3)
- Transcripts (attested Statement of Marks)

→ Nov-mid Dec

**Online Application (Sakshat)**

- Essays (broadly similar to CSC, some minor difference)
- References (3)
- One offer letter from chosen Unis 
- Proof of residence (passport or national ID)

→ June

**Nomination of award**

- Upload unconditional offer
- Sign Declaration form
- Confirmation of Award



# Commonwealth Masters & Shared Scholarships

# Selection Criteria

## Academic Merit

### Primary Indicator

- **Examination results**
- Academic transcripts
- Tutors' and referees' reports

### Secondary Indicators:

- Academic prizes or awards
- Other relevant academic achievements
- Publications, where appropriate

## Quality of Study Plans

### Primary Indicator

- Statement of **what the candidate wants to learn** and how it **relates to their objectives**
- Extent to which the proposed course and institution of study have been **well-researched** (including specific options and **dissertation topics**, where appropriate) and presented

### Secondary Indicators:

- Existing offer of admission to the course
- Clarity of presentation

## Development Impact

### Primary Indicator

- Extent of the need: how the plan of study/ **research relates to development** in the sector and country
- Expected outcomes, the projected timeframe to achieve them and potential beneficiaries
- The way and extent to which the candidate proposes to **apply new skills and qualifications**; how does this relate to development

### Secondary Indicators:

- Reference to a **national development priority or capacity shortage**
- Reference to the selected CSC theme
- Extent of the benefit: how the impact of the work might be measured
- Past demonstrable commitment to 'development' agendas through voluntary work.
- Leading or participating in relevant projects or programmes



# Commonwealth Shared Scholarship

- Commonwealth Shared Scholarships are offered in partnership with **select UK universities**.
- Supports candidates who would otherwise be unable to attend an education in the UK.
- Applicants must be a citizen, have been granted refugee status and/or be permanently based in a Commonwealth country
- Scholarship is awarded under six CSC developmental themes
- Candidates must apply **Once**: CSC
- Candidates can apply for more than one course and to more than one university
- Universities nominate a **select number of candidates depending on the university** by June.

# Application process

→ Mid Nov-Dec

Online Application (CSC)

- Essays
- College Application

→ June

Nomination of award

- References (3)

→ June - July

Confirmation of award

- Sign Declaration form
- Confirmation of Award

# Essays- Overview

Common themes  
around the  
Commonwealth  
application essays

1

## Development Impact

Development Impact Statement in four questions - how your chosen developmental issue relates to global, national and local SDG goals and who are the intended beneficiaries

2

## Study Outline

What you intend to gain from the course including a detailed overview

3

## Career Goals

Career goals immediately after the award, short term (within 5 years) and long-term (lifelong goals)

4

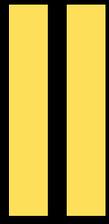
## Personal Statement

Space to connect your how personal circumstances/growth drives your interest

5

## Voluntary and Leadership Experience

500 words (link your past experience with your chosen theme/course)



# Stay Connected

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Other ways to get in touch

