



democratising access to higher education

Workshop on Gates Cambridge Scholarship
Sunday, 30 October 2022



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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



Anwasha Lahiri
PhD in Medical Sciences
Gates Cambridge Scholar 2021



Nikita Jha
PhD in Education
Gates Cambridge Scholar 2021



Rishabh Bajoria
PhD in Law
Gates Cambridge Scholar 2021



Stuti Pachisia
PhD in English
Gates Cambridge Scholar 2020

Overview: Gates-Cambridge Scholarship

- A Gates Cambridge Scholarship covers the full cost of studying at Cambridge.
- Offers ~80 full-cost scholarships to applicants from countries outside the UK to pursue a postgraduate degree in any subject available at the University of Cambridge.
- Approximately two-thirds of these awards are offered to PhD students
- Approximately 25 scholarships are given out to US applicants during the 1st round (in October), and remaining 55 of the 80 are available to other international students.
- Has a list of courses for which the scholarship is not applicable.

<https://www.gatescambridge.org/programme/the->

Components and eligibility

Core components

University Composition Fee; maintenance allowance; airfare at the start and end of the course; inbound visa costs and Immigration Health Surcharge

Discretionary components *(may be granted following additional application)*:

Academic development funding to attend conferences/courses; family allowance; maternity/paternity funding; hardship funding in case of unforeseen circumstances

Eligibility

You can apply for the scholarship if you are a non-UK citizen and are applying to the University of Cambridge for a:

- PhD (full-time or part-time*)
- MLitt (full-time)
- One year postgraduate course (full-time), with some exceptions

<https://www.gatescambridge.org/apply/eligibility/>



Selection Criteria

The selection criteria are:

1. Outstanding intellectual ability

Candidates must show evidence of academic excellence (through transcripts, references, experience and potential to succeed on the course). Academic departments at the University of Cambridge nominate only the most academically outstanding applicants for this scholarship.

2. Reasons for choice of course

Candidates should be able to make a strong case for their chosen degree and how completing the course will facilitate their career plans; research applicants are expected to make contact with a potential supervisor with whom they will develop a research project; must demonstrate academic background, necessary skills and expertise to complete the course



Selection Criteria

3. A commitment to improving the lives of others

This criterion is interpreted broadly. Applicants define it themselves by providing evidence of past, current and future commitment to the societies in which they will live and work.

4. Leadership potential.

Candidates must be able to demonstrate a capacity for leadership, which can be expressed in a multitude of ways. Applicants should provide evidence of their leadership experience to date and indicate the ways in which their leadership skills may have impact in the future careers.

<https://www.gatescambridge.org/apply/criteria/>

Timeline

- Applications for entry in the academic year 2023-24 are open.

All other eligible applicants

The large majority of applicants will apply in this round, which is aligned with the University's postgraduate funding competition. There are two possible application deadlines and these are based on the course to which you are applying. Please apply by the *Graduate Funding Competition* deadline referenced in the [University Course Directory](#). **All application documents should be submitted by 23:59pm (midnight) UK time on the stated date.**

What stage?	Date
Applications open*	Thursday 15 September 2022
Application deadline*	Dependent on your course – either 1 December 2022 or 5 January 2023 (see Course Directory)
Departmental ranking	December – February
All applicants notified of application outcome	by Friday 3 March 2022
Review and selection by panels	March 2023
Scholarships offered	Late March
Scholarships accepted	72 hours after offer

This is a screenshot from the timeline page of the Gates Cambridge website:
<https://www.gatescambridge.org/apply/timeline/>



How to apply

- Apply along with application for admission via the University's Graduate Application Portal by completing the Gates Cambridge part of the funding section.
- When applying for a Gates Cambridge Scholarship in the funding section of your application, you will be asked to provide
 - **A Gates Cambridge statement:** 3000 characters (approximately 500 words) on why you are applying for the scholarship and how you meet the four selection criteria
 - **A Research Proposal (PhD applicants only)**
 - **A Gates Cambridge reference:** In addition to two academic references for admission, Gates Cambridge applicants must arrange for someone to submit a reference setting out how they meet the scholarship's criteria.
- Gates Cambridge has access to the full application for admission and funding when reviewing applications.

How scholars are selected

Two stages: Departmental nomination and interview

- Departmental nomination

Academic departments in Cambridge must nominate a small number of eligible applicants who meet all four of the scholarship's criteria to a very high level. A small number of those who apply for a Gates Cambridge Scholarship are nominated by departments.

- Interview

All candidates nominated by academic departments are invited to a short interview to assess how they meet all four Gates Cambridge criteria. The 20-25 minute interview may be virtual or in person, with four subject-based interview panels: arts, biological sciences, physical sciences, social sciences. Scholars are then selected after interview.

<https://www.gatescambridge.org/apply/how-we-select/>

Each interview has four main sections:

1. Welcome and introduction

- The Chair will introduce the panel, set out the format of the interview, and provide any other essential information to allow for a productive conversation.

2. Gates Cambridge

- What you know about the Gates Cambridge Scholarships
- Your motivation for applying
- Why you think you could be a Gates Cambridge Scholar
- Your thoughts on the opportunities and responsibilities that a prestigious, full-cost scholarship at one of the world's leading universities brings

3. Academic and career plans

- Your academic work to date – can you convincingly communicate your passion for, and the importance of, your chosen subject?
- Your proposed degree at Cambridge – can you provide a convincing justification for your choice of course at Cambridge?
- Your career plans – can you convincingly link your application for both a Gates Cambridge Scholarship and your proposed course at Cambridge to your future career plans?
- You may also be asked probing intellectual or ethical questions, to which there are no 'right' answers

4. Final thoughts and questions

- A chance to convey any additional information and/or ask any questions to the interview panel (optional)

This is a screenshot from the 'how we select' page of the Gates Cambridge website



General Tips

- **Start early**
You'll need time to write your statement, proofread it, edit it, let it rest, revise it and pass it around for feedback. Give yourself **enough time** to do all this.
- **Answer the questions**
When you finish your first draft, **take a break** for a day or two; then return to the original prompt and make sure your statement answers it.
- **Write properly**
Proofread, proofread, **proofread**. Ask your instructors to give it a read-through. Upload it to Grammarly or the Hemingway App. Use all available resources to make sure your writing is impeccable.



General Tips

- **Show, don't tell**
Rather than just making simple descriptive statements about yourself or your skills, *show* this through examples of when you applied this skill or demonstrated a character trait.
- **Pick a good referee**
Your Gates referee should be able to speak to how you meet all 4 of the qualifying criteria, so pick carefully. In your overall application, make sure your academic referee clarifies how you rank in your class (top 5% etc).
- **Scholar Tips**

General Resources

- <https://twitter.com/steewtweets/status/1289165231126532096?s=20&t=oO9TjwoK-A4peoDHqYJjaA>
- https://www.paytonelyce.com/files/Gates_statement.pdf
- <https://blog.accepted.com/the-statement-of-purpose-that-got-me-a-large-scholarship-to-cambridge/>
- <https://www.e-education.psu.edu/writingpersonalstatementsonline/sites/www.e-education.psu.edu.writingpersonalstatementsonline/files/file/Gates.pdf>
- <https://sampurnabuffalo.wordpress.com/2017/11/16/gates-cambridge-scholarship-sample-essay-interview-and-life-after/>



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