

## Commonwealth Scholarships 2009

The Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) has been asked to nominate **two** suitable candidates for the Commonwealth Scholarship scheme and candidates are invited to submit an application to CREATE. Candidates may apply for one of two awards in the field of educational access:

- a doctoral degree, of up to three years duration (full-time);
- one year of research in the UK on a split-site basis, to aid in the completion of a PhD at the candidate's home institution.

Since their inception in 1959, some 25,000 individuals have benefited from the award of Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships to pursue advanced academic study in other Commonwealth countries. The needs of developing nations are prioritised through the scholarship scheme, but the scheme does offer genuine partnerships, opportunities and benefits for all member countries. Further information about the programme can be found at: <http://www.cscuk.org.uk/>.

The Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) was established in January 2006 to encourage the application of knowledge to improve access to basic education. It is a five-year DFID-funded programme of research, with consortium partners based in the United Kingdom, Bangladesh, India, South Africa and Ghana. CREATE is undertaking research reviews on key themes, and empirical fieldwork to explore inclusion and exclusion from basic education. Its aim is to improve sustainable access in equitable and pro-poor ways and to facilitate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and Education For All (EFA). See: <http://www.create-rpc.org> for further information on the CREATE programme.

CREATE has been asked to nominate two suitable candidates for the Commonwealth Scholarship scheme, however there is no guarantee of finally securing the award. Details of the awards scheme and how to apply can be found at: <http://www.create-rpc.org/about/commonwealth.shtml>. An application form can be downloaded from: <http://www.cscuk.org.uk/apply/applyngo.asp>

If successful, applicants would study in the UK at the Centre for International Education (CIE), University of Sussex. CIE is located within Sussex School of Education in the University of Sussex, UK. CIE provides a focal point for work on education and development in low-income countries, and is one of the foremost groups in the UK in its field. CIE has a strong international DPhil and MA in Education programme. For further information on the Centre of International Education go to: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/education/1-4-21.html> and for details on the Sussex DPhil in Education go to: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/education/1-2-16-1.html>.

### Eligibility

The following eligibility criteria apply:

- Candidates should hold, or expect to hold by October 2009, a first degree of at least upper second class honours level or a second class degree and a relevant postgraduate qualification (normally a Master's degree).
- Candidates should be able to take up their awards in October 2009.

- The Commission will not offer awards to scholars already close to completing a doctorate in their own country, although awards might be tenable to complete doctoral studies already underway in a candidate's home country. Candidates must declare if they are already registered for a higher degree.
- Applicants must be Commonwealth citizens, refugees or British protected persons, and must be permanently resident in a Commonwealth country other than the UK. Only candidates from (or working in) India, Bangladesh, Ghana and South Africa are eligible for this award. Applications from women are encouraged.

### **Selection Criteria**

Candidates should submit independent applications to CIE at the address below. CREATE consortium members will select who they wish to nominate for the Commonwealth Scholarship. CREATE will be looking for exceptional candidates who wish to pursue their studies around an aspect of educational access in/around one of CREATE's partner countries: South Africa, Bangladesh, India or Ghana. CREATE will prioritise applicants applying for the PhD programme. It is advised that candidates review the CREATE website <http://www.create-rpc.org> for further information on the programme. CREATE will also take into account the criteria of the awarding body (see below). It is possible that members of the CREATE consortia will interview candidates if deemed necessary.

The UK Commonwealth Commission will be seeking candidates of the highest academic quality, who demonstrate a real capacity to make a difference to their home country on completion of the award. The selection committee will particularly favour applications that demonstrably link to the development priorities of the home country. Candidates are encouraged to make any such links explicit in their application.

In addition, the Committee will have regard for any priority areas that have already been agreed between UK Department of International Development and authorities in the candidate's home country. Priorities will also be given to candidates whose area of work addresses the general priorities of DFID. These include:

- Growth
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Climate Change
- Health
- Governance in Challenging Environments
- Future Challenges and Opportunities
- Poverty Alleviation
- Gender Equality

### **Value of Awards**

A scholarship provides:

- Student concessionary or other approved airfare to the UK and return on expiry of the scholarship (the cost of journeys made before final award confirmation will not normally be reimbursed, nor can fares be paid for a scholar's dependents).
- Approved tuition and examination fees.
- A personal maintenance allowance at the rate of £767 per month.

- A grant towards the expenses of preparing a thesis or dissertation, where applicable.
- An initial arrival allowance, incorporating an initial clothing grant for scholars from tropical countries.
- A grant for expenses for approved travel within the UK or overseas.
- A grant towards fieldwork costs. This shall not normally exceed one economy class return airfare to the fieldwork location.
- A paid mid-term fare to their home country for scholars on three year doctoral awards. Scholars for whom fieldwork fares are provided to their home country shall not be entitled to a mid-term fare home. Nor scholars who have claimed (or intend to claim) spouse or child allowance for more than 12 months during their award.
- For married scholars on awards exceeding one year, a marriage allowance of £215 per month is payable provided the husband and wife are residing together at the same address in the UK. For married couples accompanied by their children, a child allowance is payable at the rate of £129 per month for the first child, and £101 for the second and third child under the age of 16, providing they are residing with their parents.
- A scholar who is widowed, divorced or a lone parent, will receive an allowance in respect of the first accompanying child and child allowances for the second and third accompanying child.

#### **General conditions of award**

- Scholars will be expected to reside in the UK throughout the award, and to seek prior approval for any proposed visits abroad.
- Scholars may not undertake paid employment during their award without prior consent.
- The Commission will require a medical report before an award can be made.
- Scholars will be required to sign an undertaking to return to their home country as soon as their award comes to end.
- A Commonwealth scholarship covers fees, fares and personal maintenance. Similar awards may not be held concurrently.
- Scholars will be expected to take up the award from the date stated by the Commission in its formal offer of award.
- The Commission reserves the right to publish the names of candidates provisionally selected for awards on the CFSP website. By applying for an award, the candidate gives consent for such publication in the event that his / her application is successful.

#### **Additional requirements**

The Commission requires nominated candidates from Bangladesh, Cameroon, Mozambique, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to undertake the IELTS English language test as a condition of eligibility. The test will need to have been taken after 1 October 2008 and before 6 March 2009. The requirement is for an overall score of 6.5 or above. For the two nominated candidates (only) the Commission will pay the cost of the test on submission of an invoice from the British Council test centre. In addition, the Commission or host institution in the UK, may require a candidate to take particular English tests and/or training in English.

## How to apply

Candidates should email or fax a five page research proposal for their proposed research study to Fran Hunt on [f.m.hunt@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:f.m.hunt@sussex.ac.uk) (fax: 00 44 1273 877534) as soon as possible. The research proposal should include:

- **A working title of the topic area**
- **Study focus** - An outline of the focus of research should be made. What is the problem / research area you wish to investigate? How does this relate to the CREATE focus on educational access? (Please refer to [www.create-rpc.org](http://www.create-rpc.org) for further information on CREATE and relate the research accordingly).
- **Rationale** - Why is this an important topic of research and to whom? How does the research relate to your experience and background?
- **Background information to the research area** - Contextual information in order to locate the research study (e.g. within geographical / socio-economic contexts, as relevant)
- **Identification of the relevant literature** - An indication of the types of literature you will be drawing on should be made. Gaps in current literature should also be identified in relation to your research.
- **Key research questions** - What 3-5 key questions do you wish to explore through the research?
- **Methodology** - Detail about your intended methodological approach. How do you intend to carry out the research? What research tools do you propose to use and why would they be the most appropriate?
- **Timescale/research planning** - what would be the timescale for the research?
- **Limitations / risks** - are there any limitations / potential risks which might affect the research?

Candidates should also email / fax through a recent CV with details of relevant experience and research interests. It is suggested that candidates send the research proposal and CV in advance of the formal application process (as outlined below) as the CREATE team will be able to advise on the suitability of candidates progressing their applications further.

For the formal application process, potential candidates should submit a completed application form, which can be found on the Commonwealth's website (<http://www.cscuk.org.uk/apply/applyngo.asp>). The application form should be typed rather than handwritten. Please note that further information for candidates can be found at the back of the application form and in the Commonwealth prospectus (also available on the website) and it is strongly advised that candidates read these materials carefully before filling out the form.

In sending the application form candidates should enclose:

- Six copies of the application form (do not fill in pages 2-3 or questions 3.2 and 4.3; one original and 5 photocopies is recommended).
- Five recent passport sized photographs.
- Five copies of their university / college transcript(s) and certificate(s), certified by the awarding body.
- A certified copy of their birth certificate.

- Certificate of English Language Proficiency (if necessary).
- Five copies of any university admissions letter.
- References from three referees who are qualified to comment on your ability to benefit from the proposed course of study. The references should be included in sealed envelopes. Please label the envelopes with the name of the referee and their institutional position.

Applications should be completed and sent in hard copy to:

Dr Fran Hunt  
Research Fellow, CREATE  
Centre for International Education  
SSE, University of Sussex  
Brighton, BN1 9QQ  
United Kingdom

Please contact Fran on: [f.m.hunt@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:f.m.hunt@sussex.ac.uk) or 00 44 (0)1273 873088 if you have any queries about the programme.

Completed application forms (with all necessary information) should be received by 30 November 2008 at the very latest.

Details of the awards scheme and how to apply can be found at: <http://www.create-rpc.org/about/commonwealth.shtml>.