



spark

Higher Education
Scholarship
Manual

Introduction to Higher Education Scholarship Manual

Higher Education is essential for enabling young people to reach their full potential. Investing in educating the youth of today, means helping to create the civic- and economic leaders of tomorrow. Although young refugees are eager to take up this role, they face significant obstacles that inhibit this, such as language barriers and (high) tuition fees. Because of this, only 3 percent of refugees are enrolled in Higher Education, compared to the global average of 37 percent. The share of refugee girls and women is even smaller.

Higher Education Scholarships

Scholarship programmes can help tackle these obstacles. Since 2015, SPARK has been providing scholarships (for both BA and TVET studies), counselling, skills training and work experience to young refugees. Having enabled 10,000 students, SPARK is now the largest provider of scholarships for Syrian refugees in the Middle East. However, as both the needs and the stakes remain high, SPARK is eager to support more scholarship schemes. For this purpose, we produced a Scholarship Manual that, based on our own lessons learned, can serve as an essential and useful guide.



Syrian students, Lebanon

Manual

Focusing on the practical aspects of establishing and running a scholarship programme, the Scholarship Manual consists of the following sections:

Preparation and planning:

- Analysing labour market developments;
- Analysing student needs/capacities;
- Mapping and matching Higher Education Institutions;
- Mapping relevant policies, stakeholders and government relations.

Practical preparation:

- Developing a Student Information System (SIS);
- Preparing procedures, standards, manuals and documents;
- Training staff;
- Engaging volunteers.

Visibility and publicity:

- Creating an online platform;
- Publishing scholarship calls;
- Using social media;
- Promoting the programme offline;
- Starting up a student helpdesk.

Selection and placement of students:

- Determining of selection criteria;
- Starting with applications;
- Collecting, verifying and administrating student application data;
- Interviewing and testing applicants;
- Placing and contracting of the scholarships.

Essential student services:

- Counselling and advising students;
- Providing additional (language/summer) courses;
- Providing psycho-social support;
- Providing of allowances;
- Dealing with dropouts and replacements.

Monitoring & Evaluation:

- Keeping track of key performance indicators (KPIs);
- Taking of surveys;
- Analysing of lessons learned;
- Monitoring and controlling of finances.

The SPARK Scholarship Manual offers an easily replicable model, regardless of (country) context, programme size, or target group. In order to further enhance its accessibility and practical usability, each section includes:

- Main activities within provided timeframes.
- Potential challenges and how to overcome them.
- Real-life examples.
- More than 60 ready-to-use templates and guides for operating the scholarship programme.

Who is this manual for

This manual is intended for practitioners – organisations or individuals – who design and/or implement Higher Education scholarship programmes for underserved youth.

Key results:



Starting with 100 students in 2015, we have by now enabled more than 10.000 students in the MENA region;



We have trained students that are civic-minded and professionally skilled to become community-, business- and national leaders of the future;



We are cooperating with over 25 universities and higher vocational schools in country's neighbouring Syria.



Syrian students, Lebanon

About SPARK

Founded in 1994, SPARK's mission is to create sustainable jobs in fragile places through higher education, entrepreneurship and micro-, small- and medium enterprise (MSME) development in countries affected by conflict. With our higher education services, we ensure the most reliable, effective and responsive model of awarding and administering higher education scholarships to vulnerable refugee youth, creating pathways for them towards employment and inclusion opportunities.

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You can also contact us about our manuals on:

Business Support Centres

Cooperative support: from subsistence farming to commercial farming

Internship programmes for work experience

Entrepreneurship Summer Courses

SME Coaching Manual

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