

HOW TO PREPARE FOR UK SCHOLARSHIPS

FAIJA TASFIA

The UK is the dream choice for many students but not everyone can afford to fulfil that dream. There are several scholarships available but people fear that those options are highly competitive and thus seemingly out of reach. There are also other factors tied to scholarship applications that many don't know, but a little bit of guidance can help their whole application process.

In the fourth iteration of the webinar series by The Daily Star and the British Council, guest speakers discussed various issues, application tips and information about education and scholarships in the United Kingdom, while enlightening the youth and clearing misconceptions regarding UK scholarship applications.

This session was hosted by Syed Tirtho Mahmood, Bid Manager and International Education Services Lead British Council Bangladesh, who brought together Shuvashish Roy, Chevening Scholar, Md. Ishan Arefin Hossain, GREAT Scholar and Udvashita Chakraborty, British Council Women in STEM Scholar. They talked about the prestigious Chevening, Women in STEM and GREAT scholarships while also shedding light on the application process, life and challenges in the UK.

The webinar addressed critical points about the application process, like the success factors for an application. Md Ishan says a good statement of purpose, strong academic background and IELTS scores make an application stronger. Shuvashish said, "Always go for demonstrated ideas instead of generic ones in the statement of purpose essays. Give real-life examples of how you solve issues. Write about your

vision and how you are going to achieve it." Networking is an integral part of one's career and studying abroad gives you an excellent opportunity to expand your network. "The UK is a friendly country



and you will build lifelong friendships there. You can work part-time jobs and take new opportunities in the UK. For instance, I worked as a head of marketing while doing my Master's in a startup there. I met the founder at a Halloween party. It was a good opportunity to gain work experience and

expand my network," stated Shuvashish. "There are part-time opportunities here. I worked in academia part-time. There are various websites here through which you can apply," added Arefin.

Cultural shock is a factor to keep in mind when travelling to a new country. For all of them, the weather was a significant change, to the point of extreme. For Udvashita, homesickness was the biggest challenge. According to her, at times like these, what you need the most is support. There are well-being centres in every university, and one can go there if they are having difficulties dealing with life abroad. There are different modes of accommodation as well. You can rent an apartment, or if you are lucky like Arefin, you can get a seat in the university hall with all the facilities you could want.

At the end of the session, they shared some tips for students applying or thinking of applying. "Make sure your application shows your individualism and confidence. Give it a try and apply. You can explore a lot of things during the application process itself," said Arefin. He added, "If you have earlier research publications, link them with your statement of purpose. Your application should be personalised and be positive during the time."

Arefin and Udvashita are continuing their Masters. In the end, Shuvashish shared how life has been during his stay in the UK. "I learned new and innovative things there, and I implemented those after coming back to Bangladesh. It helps me in my current job." Living in the UK has been a life-changing experience - a statement everyone agreed with.

Relate with these? Maybe it's time to switch your job

NAVID HOSSAIN

If you're feeling burnt out and thinking of taking a break, here's how to be sure you're along the right track: **STRESSFUL ENVIRONMENT**

We all know stress is bad, especially when it accumulates over time. The work pressure from jobs creates a hefty amount of stress. Fieldwork-related jobs often create the most stress. It is recommended to take a good amount of rest. If you feel tired too often, maybe it is a sign that your body cannot take pressure too well. It is time to quit and rest until you can get back at it or switch to something different.

THE DREAD IS HIGH
The monotony of a job does not

take long to hit. This creates dread. When you're stuck following the same routine for years it gets boring and repetitive. That drags you down. You lose the excitement you once had. You realise the performance you once gave is all gone. You are underperforming and no matter if you grow or switch it is still the same. You can momentarily get your excitement back. The dread comes back like that ex whom you refuse to let go of. It starts affecting your mood and you are crankier than ever. This is the time when you should quit the job, breath, and find a new passion that does not feel like a dreadful process.

RESPONSIBILITIES FEEL LIKE A BURDEN

Over time, responsibilities keep growing. You are drowning in more and more work every day. You are tired and filled with dread and your balance went out the window. At that point, those responsibilities, which made you feel powerful are now a burden. That's a surefire sign of you not enjoying your work. Hit that switch.

While these words may seem easy, in reality, it's not so black and white all the time. Switching a job is a major life decision and you should properly weigh all the pros and cons before you make the next big step.

