



UF NEWS

A Newsletter of The Universities Fund

Universities Urged to Embrace Entrepreneurship to Ensure Sustainability



Universities Fund chief executive officer Geoffrey Monari making a point during a panel discussion at the Sixth African Science, Technology, and Innovation Forum in Addis Ababa on April 22 2024.

Universities worldwide are facing a shifting landscape of funding, prompting a call for greater entrepreneurial initiatives to secure their future.

Universities Fund chief executive Geoffrey Monari has emphasised the need for the institutions of higher learning to become more self-sufficient while nurturing their students.

Speaking at the Sixth African Science, Technology, and Innovation Forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, he called on universities to embrace entrepreneurship in light of dwindling government funding.

“The golden years when universities

all over the world were receiving significant government funding are gone,” said Mr Monari who doubles up as chairman of the Alliance of Entrepreneurship Universities in Africa (AEUA).

He added that the universities ought to adapt to economic realities even as they strive to nurture discerning students that can utilise their skills in an environment with limited job opportunities.

The Alliance of Entrepreneurship Universities in Africa, which currently boasts a membership of 30 universities across the continent, is spearheading efforts to promote entrepreneurship among universities. The AEUA has since embarked on an ambitious strategy that seeks to foster the creation of one million startups and generate one billion USD in revenue.

This strategy is underpinned by ten key points designed to empower students and faculty to unlock their entrepreneurial potential.

These include strengthening the entrepreneurial frameworks of member universities, facilitating knowledge and resource sharing, encouraging research collaborations, supporting access to finance for entrepreneurial ventures as well as showcasing achievements and success stories.

In addition to these, the UEUA is engaging in policy advocacy and providing support for favorable entrepreneurship policies and implementing a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to track progress towards the goal of one million startups and one hundred billion USD in revenue.

Mr Monari asserted that universities must rethink their approach to education, placing greater emphasis on practical skills, innovation, and enterprise. The two-day forum in Addis Ababa was organised by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) alongside the African Union Commission and other partners.

The theme emphasised the role of science, technology, and innovation (STI) in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063, specifically focusing on eradicating poverty in Africa.

African leaders in attendance, their representatives and experts at the forum concluded that investment in STI is crucial for the continent’s transformation.

New Funding Model Sparks Enthusiasm Among Higher Education Stakeholders

Experts in higher education have hailed the new funding model (NFM) agreeing it has capacity to revolutionise equality, accessibility, and sustainability within universities and colleges.

The experts comprising technical teams drawn from the Universities Fund and the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS) gathered in Naivasha at a forum for open dialogue and constructive discourse.

Top on the agenda was focus on enhancing efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness in the higher education sector amid the intricate challenges faced by universities and colleges.

“Not merely a financial innovation, NFM, promises to instill a culture of accountability through a collaborative, multi-agency framework, while pioneering a novel financing blueprint for universities,” said Universities Fund chief executive Geoffrey Monari. The forum was also attended by staff from the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB), Deans of Students of public universities, financial officers and registrars.

UF’s Emmanuel Abook shared insights on the implementation of the NFM including scholarship data flow, application status, challenges faced by students, universities and the state agency, along with recommendations for process streamlining and multi-agency collaboration. The interactive forum was organised ahead of the official opening of the higher education financing (HEF) portal for the second cycle of receiving applications for government sponsorship for higher education under the new funding model.

The KUCCPS has just concluded the final placement list and it is the students on this list that are eligible for government support through scholarships, loans and bursaries. These students can get State funding for higher education by making applications for scholarships, loans and bursaries on the HEF portal.

KUCCPS representative CPA Michael Kimani shared a detailed

individual students that are joining universities and Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions.

Implementation of the new funding framework kicked off at the start of this financial year where financing shifted from block funding for the institutions to apportioning to individual students according to their level of need. The new model



Participants following proceedings at stakeholder engagement workshop for the University Fund and the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS) in Naivasha on April 18 2024

presentation outlining the agency’s mandate, the roles of finance officers and registrars, billing cycles, annual audits, and challenges encountered in data validation and student placement.

This provided valuable context for understanding KUCCPS’s pivotal role in coordinating the placement of government-sponsored students in higher education institutions. To be eligible for State funding in the second cycle, an applicant must be a Kenyan, have sat the 2023 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination and be placed by the KUCCPS.

Under the NFM, the government is seeking to channel higher education financial assistance directly to

has delinked student placement with funding, thus requiring students to submit applications to the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) and Universities Fund (UF) for loans and scholarships, respectively.

Funding to students now combines scholarships, loans and household contributions on a graduated scale that is scientifically determined. The categorisation of students is in four levels of need – vulnerable, extremely needy, needy and less needy. The government resolved that the new financing model that seeking to phase out the on differentiated unit cost (DUC) model will ease the financial burden in universities whose pending bills have ballooned to more than KSh70 billion.

TESTIMONIALS

... from Beneficiaries of Government Scholarships under the New Higher Education Funding Model

On May 3, 2023, President William Ruto unveiled the New Higher Education Funding Model (NFM), marking a pivotal moment in addressing the longstanding challenges faced by institutions of higher learning, including skyrocketing enrollment and insufficient funding. The Universities Fund has been at the forefront of handling scholarships for university students, starting with those enrolled in September last year.

Some of the beneficiaries of the 2023/2024 Government scholarships share their testimonials:

I enrolled at the University of Nairobi in September 2023, and I'm grateful to have benefited from scholarships under the New Funding Model. Since last year, I've been paying fees of approximately Ksh221,000 per academic year, which can be quite challenging for my parents, especially considering they sometimes rely solely on their salaries. Fortunately, I received a total scholarship of Ksh100,000, which has been immensely helpful. I strongly encourage others to explore government funding opportunities to support their tertiary education.



Scofield Ologi – BA Economic Statistics, University of Nairobi, First Year



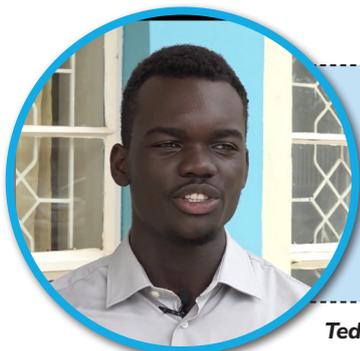
I first learned about the NFM when President Ruto announced it, and I applied primarily because of the scholarship component. I gathered more information about the NFM from peers and social media. Some challenges I encountered during the application process included portal buffering and document sourcing, especially given the limited time. However, I sought and appreciated assistance from the Huduma Centre. I highly recommend the scholarship, as it significantly facilitates the transition to university.

Carol Muchomba – Bachelor in Pure Economics, Kenyatta University, First Year (Band 4)

As a student at UON since September 2023, I faced the challenge of exorbitant school fees, especially as the sole responsibility fell on my single parent. Consequently, I had no choice but to apply for Government funding. While uncertain about my category placement, I appreciate the consideration given to students' backgrounds in fund allocation. Enhancing the functionality of the HEF portal is paramount to streamline the application process and ensuring timely disbursement of funds is crucial to prevent registration delays due to outstanding fees.



Jane Mweni – Bachelor of Arts in Economics, University of Nairobi - First Year



I learned about the New Funding Model from my parents when I joined campus last year. Of the Ksh306,000 tuition fee per year, my parents only cover Ksh93,000, thanks to the scholarship I received. However, I propose that the Government increases scholarship amounts and simplifies the application process. Further, the rural communities need targeted awareness campaigns to ensure universal access to higher education.

Teddy Bryan - BSc Mathematics and Computer Science, Kenyatta University, First Year

Understanding government scholarship under the New Higher Education Funding Model

In May 2023, the government announced a new funding model for institutions of higher learning that is student centered, predictable and that would encourage the universities and colleges alternative revenue streams.

The new funding framework phases out the Differentiated Unit Cost (DUC) model and seeks to remedy the cash crunch crippling public university operations. Below are some frequently asked questions on the new funding model;

What is the New Higher Education Funding Model?

It is a new way of providing financial support to students enrolled in universities and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions to ensure every Kenyan student is assisted according to their level of need.

Why did the government come up with the New Funding Model?

To ensure equitable distribution of funds to students for higher educations and to motivate the institutions to find innovative and sustainable ways of being financial sound. The New Funding Model is a student-centered approach based on the actual cost of the programme with funding varied as per the level of need as assessed by the Means Testing Instrument (MTI).

What is MTI?

It is a reliable scientific method used to determine the student's level of financial need so as to ensure they are supported adequately

Who qualifies for the Scholarship?

To be eligible for the scholarship, one must be Kenyan and a 2022 KCSE examination candidate for university learners. He or she must have been placed by the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central

Placement Service (KUCCPS) to pursue an undergraduate, diploma, craft certificate or artisan course at one of Kenya's accredited public universities or TVET colleges. Scholarship application is open to students who sat their Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination from 2022 onwards.

How will scholarships for university students be awarded?

Scholarship awards will be categorised differently. The Universities Fund will provide scholarships to students between 30% to 70% depending on level of need. The deficit will be met through household contributions and loans. To receive scholarships, students will be required to formally apply on the Higher Education Funding (HEF) Portal – www.hef.co.ke. The Means Testing Instrument (MTI) tool will be used to determine the level of need for funding students.

Will this New Funding Model apply to continuing students?

All continuing government-sponsored students shall be supported in line with the previously existing funding model – the differentiated unit cost (DUC) model

Can students below 18 years apply for the scholarship since we know those below that age have previously not been allowed to apply for study loans?

Minors – individuals who have not attained 18 years of age – who sat their KCSE examination last year and have been placed by KUCCPS in a public university or TVET college can apply for the Higher Education Government Student Scholarship. Once the individuals reach 18, they will be required to update their profiles to continue benefiting from the government scholarship and loan.

Is it a must for a student to apply for the Higher Education Government Student Scholarship?

It is not mandatory. It is advisable to only apply for the scholarship if you need government financial assistance.

What are the steps one needs to follow when applying for a Government Student Scholarship?

To apply for a Government Student Scholarship, visit www.hef.co.ke. Remember also to keep an eye on official communication channels and updates from the Universities Fund social media channels for announcements regarding application details and deadlines. Prepare the required documents, including academic records, personal details, student residential and education background. If necessary, gather letters of recommendation to support your application. Ensure you have the necessary documents available, including the "Consent to Collect Personal Data" form.

Are Government Student Scholarships based on financial need, merit or both?

The scholarship is based on the financial needs of the applicant and academic merit. One must be placed by KUCCPS to a public university.

Is the application for the Government Student Scholarship a one-off for a leaner throughout the degree?

For you to get the Government Student Scholarships, you must apply through www.hef.co.ke and submit an application every year for the course duration.

What happens if one receives less than the Government Student Scholarship award applied/or?

An individual may appeal or request a review of their Government Student Scholarships award if they were not satisfied with the amount given. This includes unsuccessful scholarship applications.

Can a foreigner apply and receive the Government Student Scholarship?

No, this scholarship is restricted to Kenyans only. International students should check with their institutions, governments or financial aid offices to determine if they are eligible for other scholarships.