

CHUSS holds a pre-application workshop for prospective 2022 graduate applicants

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) on 19th March 2022, held a pre-application workshop for the prospective 2022 PhD applicants for Gerda Henkel Call.

The blended workshop held physically and online attracted over 30 Ugandans with graduate education at a level of masters in the humanities and social sciences. Another over 30 non-Ugandan participants from Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria and other countries attended online.

Speaking during the function, the CHUSS Co-ordinator Gerda Henkel and Andrew Mellon projects Dr. Edgar Nabutanyi said after the 2017 round of application, it was realized that there were so many mistakes' applicants had made, hence the need to sit down with prospective applicants to address the mistakes.

“The essence of this pre-writing workshop is to meet with the possible applicants and clarify, especially the issue of historical humanities and humanistic social sciences. This is an academic area that is not common within the African and Ugandan universities.

Also in the process, we have established a data bank for possible humanities scholars and applicants which is useful for the university and college especially when assessing what it has done and what impact has been made”, Dr. Nabutanyi explained

Dr. Nabutanyi expressed the need for applicants to be acquainted with the application process as an important moment in their lives that should be given all the attention it deserves advising them not to be discouraged but to keep on trying despite unsuccessful attempts.

The project Co-coordinator Dr. Levis Mugumya shared that with funding from the Gerda Henkel Foundation of Dusseldorf Germany, CHUSS seeks to admit 10 students for the 2022 intake of the Inter-disciplinary PhD in Historical Humanities and Humanistic Social Sciences.

“Historical Humanities and Humanistic Social Sciences include, but are not limited to a cluster of subjects (disciplines) that study human society with a particular sensitivity to change over time in shifting historical contexts with various kinds of evidence to support analyses of what informs and shapes the changes and the implications of such changes in human society”.

Dr. Mugumya reported that preference will be accorded to projects that approach the study of the Humanities and Social Sciences with a clearly strong historical focus in a number of fields including; The Classics, namely literature, philosophy, epic, and drama, Prehistory/Early History of Africa, Archaeology, Modern African History, Sociology and Anthropology. Others are Language and Linguistics, Creative Arts in Africa, Religion in Africa. and Political theory,

General requirements according to Dr. Mugumya include research experience in the Humanities and Social Sciences at a University or a Research Institute and a strong foundation in writing and research methods as desirable. The applicant should also have excellent oral and written communication skills and since this is a PhD by research, he added, applicants should demonstrate capacity for independent work and have excellent interpersonal and problem-solving skills.

Dr. Mugumya explained that Eligible candidates should be Ugandan nationals or nationals of a Sub-Saharan African country holding a Master's degree in the Humanities and Social Sciences discipline, completed less than ten years ago, holds an Honours undergraduate degree in the Humanities and Social Sciences from a recognised university related to the specialisation s/he is applying for, show proof of fluency in English Language, must be available to undertake a three-year full-time study and should be under the age of 40 years (male) or 45 years (female) by 30 September 2022. among others

The workshop brought together a number of staff from CHUSS , Gerda Henkel Amnuni and current beneficiaries who guided participants on dos and donts of writing a funding proposal, issues to watch out while preparing the application package and key issues to note in the CHUSS Application form.

Sharing his experience on managing application timeline, the Gerda Henkel Alumni Dr. Abdul Mahahjibu demystified the notion that a PhD cannot be done in three years.

“ I am living testimony that a PhD in Makerere can be accomplished in three years. Don't look at PhD as an opportunity to earn money. If you are the type, you will not finish in record time. If you are to earn your PhD, you have to prove beyond reasonable doubt that it is your own work.

Have your academic document certified, have a concept note, do not listen to detractors and associate with people who know your intellectual growth as referees, collect as much literature as you can, identify research gaps and convert working under pressure into an opportunity”, Dr. Mahahjibu advised.

Presenting on preparing the application package, Dr. Taabu James Busimba advised participants to be observant of the ideologies and interests of the funders, be organized, logical and empathetic in presentation, check out the eligibility and have a checklist of all required documents.

“With efficient and effective handling of your basic and key documents and the principle of RATES (Relevance, Accuracy, Timeliness. Excellence and Standards), you are good to go”. Dr. Taabu Busimba advised.

Highlighting key issues to note on the CHUSS application form, Dr. Pamela Kanakwa emphasized the need for participants to align the information in the form with the academic documents to avoid doubt.

Dr. Kanakwa also advised participants to read and understand the form, be sincere as possible and ensure they conform to the requirements specified.

“The abstract should be concise and self-contained. It should summarise what you intend to do . to attract the attention of the reader and it will determine whether one reads the work or not”, She said.

Mr. William Musamba applied three times to attain the Gerda-Henkel Masters scholarship and six times to secure a Bachelors scholarship. He said, it is possible.

He advised participants to ensure that the concept is aligned to Gerda Henkel themes and always keep in touch with people who have reached where they would like to go.

“If you fail to get the grant the first attempt, try the second chance. Even if the second one does not go through, do not give up but your concept should tally with the terms and conditions of the funder. One who has gold makes the rules, and one without, abides by the rules”. Musamba said.

Compiled by:

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