**DUOLINGO x UNHCR University Access Program**

Duolingo English Test partners with UNHCR to launch a first-of-its-kind partnership aimed at providing high-potential refugees with access to higher education.

**BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Today, only 5% of all refugees ever enroll in a university. To help address this crisis, the Duolingo English Test has hired a university advisor to directly support the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and their work with refugees seeking higher education. In 2022, Laura Kaub joined the program to advise 25 refugee students from targeted regions of the world and guide them through university admissions and financial aid processes. We envision that this program will be transformative in creating a framework for refugee university access and will reinforce UNHCR’s 15by30 initiative, which aims to increase refugee enrollment in higher education to 15% by 2030.

**PROGRAM DETAILS AND TIMELINE**

After reviewing over 100 applications from carefully vetted candidates in four UNHCR locations - Cameroon, India, Iraq, and South Africa - we’ve identified 64 finalists to be interviewed by a panel of admissions experts. They chose 25 students to become the inaugural cohort of Duolingo University Access Scholars.

These Scholars will receive individualized support from Laura as they explore university and career pathways around the world, as well as one-on-one guidance on how to prepare and submit applications for admission and financial aid. UNHCR will help ensure that Scholars receive the necessary study visas and travel documents to transition successfully to their countries of study in 2023.

**APRIL - JUNE 2022**

Inaugural cohort selection of 25 highly-qualified refugee Scholars

**JULY - DECEMBER 2022**

Scholar exploration, advising, and applications submission

**JANUARY - MAY 2023**

Admission to, and later enrollment in universities around the world
MEET THE SCHOLARS

Christine - D.R. Congo
Passionate about civil engineering and the chance to build infrastructure across the Congo so communities can better connect with each other. She wants to show refugee girls that they can become anything they want!

Asadullah - Afghanistan
Speaks several languages - two of them computer coding languages! He’s currently taking a free class on ethical hacking and wants to be a computer engineer. Soon, Asa wants to host a YouTube channel teaching other refugees coding.

Tasmida - Myanmar
The first Rohingya refugee girl in India to graduate from high school. She wants to become a human rights lawyer and give the Rohingya community a voice at the table when their status is being discussed and decided upon.

GET INVOLVED
Laura Kaub, Duolingo x UNHCR Access Advisor, welcomes conversations with universities eager to invite such highly qualified refugees into their communities in the spring or fall of 2023, and with foundations and other donors who want to support the Scholars as they pursue their studies. Scholars will require fullest financial support, including for tuition, accommodation and food, and study materials. We hope institutions will provide this, but also hope to raise funds to close small gaps for things like visa fees and flight costs.

Interested universities should reach out to Laura at laura.kaub@duolingo.com to learn more about our candidates and discuss partnering with the Duolingo English Test and UNHCR to enroll these highly qualified refugee students. This is an exciting opportunity to help address a critical need and to enrich your university community with students who bring a unique and valuable perspective to classrooms and residential life conversations.

Laura Kaub, Duolingo x UNHCR Access Advisor, has nearly 15 years of experience in helping young leaders gain access to higher education in the United States and around the world. Having worked on ‘both sides of the desk’ as an admissions officer and a college counselor, Laura has helped hundreds of students pursue their studies and develop the skills to transform their lives and communities. In addition to her work with Duolingo and UNHCR, Laura serves on the Executive Committee of the HALI Access Network, an association of schools and organizations working with high-achieving, low-income African students who wish to pursue tertiary education abroad. She also regularly presents at International ACAC, IC3, and CIS conferences and webinars.

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