Practitioner Networks and Digital Inclusion for Higher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Scholarships for the MSc in Digital Education

The role that digital education plays and might continue to play in providing access to higher education throughout sub-Saharan Africa is both promising and perilous. No single approach to digital education will effectively scale in the manner intended and will potentially exacerbate the marginalization that these groups experience. What does scale, however, are the multiplier effects of education itself.

Candidates from six Ugandan universities will study on the MSc in Digital Education, and further that education in dedicated cohorts designed to translate their critical experiences on the programme into tangible policy, strategy, and practice instruments for their institutions. These students will act as ambassadors for others in their communities and their institutions both in their subject matter expertise but also in their capacity to navigate the vast array of online education that is on offer.

What we offer

1. A full scholarship to study on the fully online MSc in Digital Education at the University of Edinburgh, a world-leading programme taught by renowned researchers exploring the critical issues of digital education.
2. Peer access to our programme student cohort, a collection of ~200 students in ~60 countries, all working in digital education across universities, schools, Ministries of Education, INGOs, commercial organisations and more.
3. Dedicated collaboration with the programme team, Dr Michael Gallagher and Dr Pete Evans, to develop networks of universities working towards digital inclusion in Ugandan higher education. Scholarship students will receive considerable support throughout this study.

4. Collaborative research opportunities between the MSc team members and participating Ugandan universities, and strategy and policy development opportunities for digital inclusion in Uganda. There will be research, strategy, and policy outputs from this study, and we will generate these collaboratively.

Who qualifies for these scholarships?

We are looking for active academics from the six participating Ugandan universities: Makerere University, Bugema University, Gulu University, Uganda Martyr's University (Nkozi), Kyambogo University, and Nkumba University. Potential candidates need not have any technological skills or background. Rather, they should be interested in the role that digital technologies might play in Ugandan higher education, particularly for marginalised groups such as women, displaced populations, and those with disabilities. If you are an active faculty member at any of these universities and want to critically research this subject, you qualify.

When does it start?

The programme will start in September 2023. We are accepting applications for this programme currently.

Contact Us

- Have any questions or want to express interest? Contact Dr Michael Gallagher, Programme Director of the MSc in Digital Education, michael.s.gallagher@ed.ac.uk.
- Learn more about the MSc in Digital Education programme at https://digital.education.ed.ac.uk/.
- Learn more about the project at https://www.de.ed.ac.uk/project/practitioner-networks-and-digital-inclusion-higher-education-sub-saharan-africa.

MSc in Digital Education, Practitioner Networks, and Digital Inclusion

Practitioner networks are positioned as a means of acting on what they are learning in policy and practice. Each year the cohorts will focus on set objectives to make them self-sustaining on completion of the programme. Assessments will be tailored to address pressing needs at their institutions.

Coursework will include
- digital education strategy and policy
- critical data and eduction studies
- digital education in the Global South/majority world
- course design for digital environments

Year 1

Discuss, debate, trust: in the first semester, networks will proxy as study groups to build trust and discuss concepts

Articulate responses to need: in this phase, networks will be oriented towards practical concerns of policy, strategy, pedagogy. Outputs such as policy or strategy statements, needs analysis.

Identify values and confidently assert them: in this phase, networks generate value statements as manifestos to confidently assert their position on digital education

Year 2

Advocate: in this second year, networks transition to advocacy to address institutional barriers to equitable digital education

Ambassador: to make this self-sustaining, networks identify means for acting as ambassadors for digital education at their respective institutions. Bodies of activity are identified to achieve this aim.

Disseminate: At intervals networks report out to the larger community, and to their institutions at events hosted by Edinburgh as practice worth sharing sessions and outputs are redefined for academic publications.