

# Human Capacity Development Program

## Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), Iraq

### Scholarship Overview:

- The KRG Human Capacity Development (scholarship) Program (HCDP) started in 2010 with \$100 million of funding from the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The program is administered by the KRG Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (KRG MoHE) in northern Iraq (Iraqi Kurdistan Region).
- Currently, there are about 50 students in the United States. The KRG MoHE awarded more than 1000 scholarships in 2010 and plans to award an additional 1000 scholarships in 2011. Scholarships are for Master's and Doctorate studies at universities in 28 countries.
- All students sign a contract that obligates them to pay back the money spent on the scholarship package if the student does not complete the program or does not return to Iraq.

### Student Eligibility and Selection:

- Students must obtain a minimum grade of 65% in their previous degree studies; this score represents strong academic skills in the Iraqi system. Master's applicants must not be more than 35 years old; PhD applicants must not be more than 40. Full eligibility rules can be found at: <http://www.mhe-krq.org/node/412>
- KRG MoHE uses a competitive selection process. Students are chosen based on the application and transcript grades. Students compete for the scholarship with other students from the IKR.

### Scholarship Benefits:

- Students receive a full scholarship for 6 to 9 months of Intensive English Language study at a U.S. university (to a maximum of \$10,000). They also receive two years of funding for a Master's and 3 to 5 years for a PhD program including tuition and fees, books, and travel to the U.S.A. Students receive a monthly stipend of \$1,800, plus 50% of that amount for a spouse. Health insurance is provided for the student and family. Most students receive J1 or J2 visas.
- Most students apply for Conditional Admission; students take the GRE test while studying ESL at the U.S. university. Students receive some support from the KRG MoHE advising center, but students are responsible for applying and getting accepted at a U.S. university. Students pay the application fee, U.S. visa application fee and SEVIS fee themselves.
- Students receive funding from the KRG MoHE by bank transfer; students pay all tuition and fees to the U.S. university directly. Students receive scholarship letter from KRG MoHE to submit to U.S. universities.

### Challenges and Future Plans:

- Raising English levels of students to meet graduate program requirements.
- Most Iraqis do not have credit cards; DS-2019 Forms must be sent to Iraq by courier.
- Students suffer culture shock because of lack of exposure to foreign cultures.
- KRG MoHE will award at least 1000 scholarships per year until 2014.

### Other Programs of Interest for Partnership:

- PhD Research Fellowships
- Professional English language training
- Split-site Phd studies
- English language courses

### Contact:

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