

## **The Sekforde House Trust Scholarships. Academic Year 2023 - 2024**

### **Invitation**

Applications are invited for the following Sekforde House Trust scholarships for the academic year September 2023 to June 2024.

### **Available scholarships.**

Six £20,000 scholarships.

### **About the Sekforde House Trust**

The Sekforde House Trust (“the Trust”) was founded in memory of Professor Dame Kathleen Lonsdale FRS who received a scholarship at the age of 16 to study at University in London without which she would have been unable to pursue her career as a scientist and her life as a campaigner for peace and (following her own prison sentence served at Holloway) prison reform.

The purpose of the Trust is to promote education.

The Trust is funded, in the main, by the profits made by the Sekforde public house on Sekforde Street.

The trustees are David Lonsdale (chairman), Mihail Kostov and Ms Susie Hicks all of 34 Sekforde Street London EC1R 0HA.

The Trust has been offering scholarships since 2017 and already Sekforde scholars have made a significant impact on society.

### **About the scholarships**

We aim to invest in the education and future of exceptional students in the hope and expectation that there will be a return to society. Scholars will be ambitious men and women who want to live extraordinary lives and make a difference to the (unfair and unsustainable) world in which we live. Scholars are not charitable objects. The trustees are proud of all the students in whom we are investing the Trust’s money.

## **Application criteria**

The scholarships are aimed at students who have a place at the City University, University College London or Queen Mary University of London. Both the City University and Queen Mary have campuses close to the Sekforde and are our local universities.

UCL was Kathleen Lonsdale's university, and she was the first woman to obtain a professorship in 1949.

Students applying will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Outstanding academic or other ability.
2. Financial need.
3. A desire and ability to make the world fairer and more sustainable.

Foreign students are most welcome to apply but will ordinarily be required to attend interview in London if selected for interview.

The Trust will consider paying the cost of attending for interview and can provide overnight accommodation.

It is not essential to meet all the criteria. But most scholars will do so.

The scholarships are available for existing students at all levels as well as students who have places to study.

## **Opening date for applications and deadline.**

The opening date is 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023 and the closing date is 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023. Late applications may be allowed where there is an acceptable reason for being late.

## **Content of Applications**

The application should *usually* be sent by *ordinary* post to 34 Sekforde Street London EC1 R0HA or hand delivered. It should be sent in a single envelope and contain the following documents:

1. A personal statement of no more than 700 words. The statement should demonstrate how the Applicant meets one or more of the criteria and provide a real insight into the person

making the application. These statements often contain very personal information, and the contents will be kept strictly confidential.

2. A curriculum vitae on one A4 page. The cv should have attached a passport sized photograph so that the Applicant can be remembered and more easily identified.
3. A closed personal reference. This means that the reference should not be seen by the Applicant. It should be sent in a sealed envelope. It should be provided by a person who knows the Applicant well and should focus on character potential and commitment. It should not be more than 500 words. It should avoid exaggerated praise or “gush”.
4. A closed academic reference. This means the reference should not be seen by the Applicant. It should be sent in a sealed envelope. The referee should critically assess the Applicant both in terms of academic achievement and potential. The reference should be rigorous objective and fair. It should be no more than 500 words. Academic referees of candidates who may be selected for interview should be prepared to be contacted by telephone or email for further information.
5. Although not required, Applicants may send an example of their work or provide details of anything published on the internet which may be relevant to the Application.

### **Alternative method of applying or providing references**

Although it helps the trustees if the applications are sent by post in one envelope, sometimes it is difficult or impossible to do so. Applications *can* be accepted by email and should be sent to David Lonsdale at [dl@33br.co.uk](mailto:dl@33br.co.uk). Furthermore, it is always entirely acceptable for references to be sent to this email address even where the application itself is sent by post.

### **The procedure**

The Trust cannot *ordinarily* engage in correspondence or discussion about the scholarships with Applicants. It does not have any employees and all the trustees and external assessors are volunteers. Applicants are asked not to contact the trustees unless they really feel they must do so. The chairman of the trustees may exceptionally be contacted at [dl@33br.co.uk](mailto:dl@33br.co.uk) and his telephone number is 07979454141.

After the deadline, all applications will be reviewed carefully by the trustees. Approximately 12 to 15 candidates will be selected for interview and contacted by telephone. The interviews will take place on Sunday 3rd September 2023. The interview panel consists of the trustees and three external assessors. At least one of the external assessors is a former scholar. One is a member of staff at the Sekforde.

There is no dress code for the interviews. Casual dress is entirely acceptable. The interviews are friendly but vigorous and will last about 30 minutes. If an applicant is unable to attend an interview in person on the date required, then ordinarily it will not be possible to consider the application further.

Any member of the panel may veto an applicant. This is to ensure that the decision to award is ultimately unanimous, and every member's views are taken into consideration.

Successful candidates are informed of the decision within 24 hours of the final interview. Scholarships are paid by cheque and in full on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

### **Feedback**

All unsuccessful applicants will **not** be informed of the decision. The trustees do not provide feedback. This is because all the trustees are volunteers, and we have limited time and resources. Also, decisions are often difficult and involve disagreements. We want to be able to speak freely about relative merits without worrying about how we express ourselves.

### **Requirement of Scholars**

The Trust is a registered charity and must demonstrate its expenditure is for the purpose of advancing education. The Trust cannot and does not monitor how the scholars spend their money. It relies upon them and trusts them to use the scholarships sensibly to further their education. It does require the scholars to report back on their progress at least twice in the academic year.

It is hoped that the scholars will remain in touch with the Trust as they pursue their goals in life, but this is only a hope and not an expectation or requirement.

### **Finally**

I just wanted to say something personal. I find the whole process of selecting people for interview and then choosing just six scholars out of so many applications extremely hard. Nearly all applicants deserve a scholarship. It is most unjust how hard life is for so many students and I wish we had more money available. I do appreciate the effort in applying and the bitter disappointment if you do not hear good news from us. But if you do decide to apply, then I wish you the best of luck and I do look forward to hearing from you.

David Lonsdale

(Chairman of the Trust)

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