

Education New Zealand Briefing

Title: Round 2 of the 2020/21 Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia and Latin America

Date: 25 March 2021 **Priority:** High

Security level: In confidence **ENZ ID no:** 2021-175

Action sought

Addressee	Action sought	Deadline
Minister of Education	<p>Discuss Education New Zealand's intention to un Round 2 of the 2020/21 Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia and Latin America in April 2021 for group applications only at the education agencies meeting on 29 March 2021.</p> <p>Consider the risks and opportunitie of running Round 2 of the 2020/21 Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia and Latin America as part of the discussion with educat on agency officials.</p> <p>Note that running Round 2 of the Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia and atin America will show the Government's ngoi g support for the international education sector ollowing the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Note that t at approved groups would only be able to take up their scholarships if their travel adheres to a set o cond tions to protect safety and welfare, including requiring that travel aligns with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Travel Advisory.</p> <p>Note hat Education New Zealand will offer a further 12 month deferral from 31 March 2021 for scholarship recipients unable to take up their scholarship in 2020.</p> <p>Refer this briefing to the Minister of Foreign Affairs for information.</p> <p>Agree that this briefing will be proactively released as per your expectation that information be released as soon as possible. Any information which may need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.</p>	29 March 2021

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Cell phone	1 st contact
Angela Meredith	Accountability Manager	021 818 905	x
Grant McPherson	Chief Executive	021 665 300	

The following departments/agencies have seen this report

MoE NZQA MBIE MFaT TEC Other:

Comments

Proactive release

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Recommendations

Education New Zealand recommends that you

- a. **discuss** Education New Zealand's intention to run Round 2 of the 2020/21 Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia and Latin America in April 2021 for group applications only at the education agencies meeting on 29 March 2021
- Agree / Disagree**
- b. **consider** the risks and opportunities of running Round 2 of the 2020/21 Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia and Latin America as part of the discussion with education agency officials
- Agree / Disagree**
- c. **note** that running Round 2 of the Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia and Latin America will show the Government's ongoing support for the international education sector following the Covid-19 pandemic
- Noted**
- d. **note** that that approved groups would only be able to take up their scholarships if their travel adheres to a set of conditions to protect safety and welfare, including requiring that travel aligns with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Travel Advisory
- Noted**
- e. **note** that Education New Zealand will offer a further 12 month deferral from 31 March 2021 for scholarship recipients unable to take up their scholarship in 2020
- Noted**
- f. **refer** this briefing to the Minister of Foreign Affairs for information
- Agree / Disagree**

- g. **agree** that this briefing will be proactively released as per your expectation that information be released as soon as possible. Any information which may need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982

Agree / Disagree



Grant McPherson
Chief Executive
Education New Zealand

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education
___/___/2021

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Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to inform the Minister that Education New Zealand (ENZ) will run Round 2 of the 2020/21 Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia (PMSA) and Latin America (PMSLA).

Background

2. The PMSA and PMSLA are outbound mobility programmes funded by the New Zealand Government and administered by ENZ. The PMSA and PMSLA provide scholarships to New Zealand citizens or permanent residents aged 18 or over to undertake up to two years of study, internship or research in Asia or Latin America, which must be linked to New Zealand's education, economic or trade agenda.
3. Under the *International Education Strategy 2018-2030* (IES) and the *Strategic Recovery Plan for International Education*, New Zealand is moving from a narrow focus on recruiting fee-paying international students to embracing reciprocal, sustainable approaches with global partners. The PMSA and PMSLA contribute to the delivery of the IES through the Goal 3 (Global Citizens) objectives of:
 - all students gaining the knowledge, skills and capabilities they need to live, work and learn globally
 - international education provides stronger global connections, research links and partnerships for New Zealand.
4. The scholarships aim to:
 - strengthen New Zealand's understanding of other cultures
 - establish connections between New Zealand and other countries through recipients building lifelong friendships and networks
 - improve the international skills of the New Zealand workforce
 - increase international understanding of the strength and quality of New Zealand's education system
 - improve the internationalisation of New Zealand tertiary institutions
 - enhance partnerships between New Zealand and Asian/Latin American institutions
 - strengthen and support New Zealand's ability to engage with key Asian and Latin American trading partners.
5. The regions were selected for these scholarships as Asia and Latin America are strategically important regions for New Zealand, with 15 of New Zealand's top 25 trading partners in the regions. Building people-to-people links also lays the foundation for further collaboration and relationships (academic, cultural, commercial) that contribute to developing trade and business links. The PMSA scholarship between 2013 and 2020 was awarded to 2,003 New Zealand students and the PMSLA scholarship between 2016 and 2020 was awarded to 400 New Zealand students.
6. The PMSA and PMSLA have funding of \$3.75 million per year through the Tertiary Scholarships and Awards appropriation. Funding is split, with \$2.75 million of the appropriation allocated to the PMSA and \$1 million to the PMSLA.



7. ENZ usually runs two scholarship rounds per year (known as the August and March rounds) with scholarships awarded to individuals and groups¹. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ENZ cancelled the March 2020 and August 2020 rounds of the scholarships. As a result of cancelling Round 1 for 2020/21, ENZ returned the \$1.875 million funding that was allocated to that scholarship round.

Approach for Round 2 for 2020/21

8. Vaccination programmes are underway around the world and, although information on vaccines is still developing, there is a possibility that countries will relax international borders restrictions or open safe travel zones over the next 12 months especially in the first half of 2022. As the scholarship recipients have 12 months to take up the scholarship from when the scholarship is awarded, and based on current information, ENZ and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) believe that Round 2 of the 2020/21 PMSA and PMSLA could be undertaken and scholarships awarded so that the recipients can travel overseas when it is safe to do so.
9. ENZ believes that the Round 2 of the 2020/21 PMSA and PMSLA should be run as it would:
 - show the Government's ongoing support for the international education sector; only the tourism sector has been more impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - deliver on the Government's Strategic Recovery Plan for International Education which seeks to create enduring relationships between New Zealand and other countries for mutual benefit.
 - ensure that progress continues against the long-term outcomes of the IES, in particular the opportunity for all students to develop skills, knowledge and capabilities to be global citizens and for international education to provide stronger global connections.
 - demonstrate the importance of, and New Zealand's commitment to, growing our bilateral relationships. [REDACTED] and it could be perceived by partner countries as a positive sign of support by New Zealand for the bilateral relationship, [REDACTED]
 - build and strengthen connections between New Zealand education providers and research institutions with their key counterparts in Asia and Latin America. This will demonstrate reciprocity in the flow of students and knowledge to build New Zealand's bilateral and multilateral education partnerships.

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Withheld under s 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Official Information Act 1982

¹ Group applications are typically organised by New Zealand education providers and support their institution to institution relationships.

- maintain or minimise the loss of capability and capacity within New Zealand education providers. Running the round would enable New Zealand education providers to start planning with confidence for offshore activities in the 2022 year.
 - develop New Zealand students to become global citizens and gain the cultural competencies – the knowledge, skills and capabilities they need to live, work and learn globally.
10. ENZ's proposed approach is to open Round 2 of 2020/2021 of the Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia and Latin America in mid-April with final selection and allocation taking place before the end of June 2021. Travel will only take place when the MFAT SafeTravel Advisory alert level allows New Zealanders to safely travel overseas and appropriate insurance cover can be purchased.
 11. To mitigate concerns about student wellbeing, ENZ will restrict Round 2 to group applications administered by New Zealand education providers, as the education providers select the scholarship recipients closer to the time of travel. This increases the likelihood of all awardees successfully undertaking and completing their scholarship programme. By allowing only education providers to apply, much of the administrative work is passed to the education providers after the scholarship has been awarded, as well as pastoral care responsibilities.
 12. In previous rounds, ENZ has indicated that preference is given to applications for study or internship in particular countries. To mitigate concerns about the impact of the pandemic on some countries within Asia and Latin America, opening the applications to group applications only would enable ENZ to provide guidance to applicants about countries to focus their applications on.
 13. ENZ has considered potential risks and mitigations for running the round; we are confident that the benefit in terms of supporting the sector and offering an international learning opportunity that can be undertaken when it's safe to do so outweigh any associated risks.

Previous PMSA and PMSLA recipients who have been unable to travel overseas

14. In March 2020, ENZ deferred the scholarships of the PMSA and PMSLA recipients who had not yet travelled overseas to take up their scholarship, guided by the MFAT SafeTravel advice at that time. The deferrals for these recipients will expire on 31 March 2021. As a result, ENZ is offering these recipients a further 12-month deferral to 31 March 2022. Funding was set aside for these scholarships in 2019/20.

Next steps

15. ENZ officials will take the outcomes of the Ministerial discussion with education agency officials back to the ENZ Board for their consideration.
16. ENZ plans to open Round 2 of the 2020/21 PMSA and PMSLA to group applications on 6 April 2021.



17. Round 1 of the 2021/22 PMSA and PMSLA will open in August 2021. Closer to the opening of this round, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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