



## Scholarship Programs

### Scholarship Programs Newsletter Issue 4 – Fall 2008

Greetings from New York and London!

As the new academic year gets underway and the 2009-10 scholarship application calls are announced, we here at OSI's Network Scholarship Programs (NSP) wish to keep you informed of a packed summer of events.

From revisiting current scholars and alumni during Mid Year and Regional Alumni Conferences, to making our first connections to the incoming scholars during NSP Summer Schools, NSP have endeavored to link with grantees new and old in a variety of ways.

We hope you enjoy the NSP update, and if you have any comments to make, please do not hesitate to contact us at any point through our inbox: [scholars@sorosny.org](mailto:scholars@sorosny.org).

At this time of year, both the London and New York NSP offices would like to wish you all the very best for the holiday period and a successful 2009!

- Network Scholarship Programs

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## **Spring Conference Reports 2008**

### **CNOUS/OSI Program: February 2008 – Mid Year Conference in Paris**

*Celine Keshishian, NSP Program Manager*

15 CNOUS/OSI grantees gathered at the Centre National des Œuvres Universitaires et Scolaires for the Mid-Year Conference in Paris, France. Grantees were in the midst of completing their Masters degrees at various universities throughout France in fields such as Economic Theory, Law, and Political Science. Each student used the conference as an opportunity to update their peers on their current research or internship activities. Likhmonjon, a lawyer from Uzbekistan, elaborated on his new internship with Handicap International, which subsequently offered him a position with their offices in Central Asia.

This year, three professors from Bordeaux, Lyon, and Strasbourg participated in the conference and offered advice to grantees regarding their research topics.

During the second day of the conference, students participated in an interactive grant proposal writing workshop to develop their skills should they decide to apply for project grants in Central Asia after graduation. The workshop was followed by an excursion to the Musée du Louvre.

### **UK Programs Mid Year Conference: April 2008, University of Durham, England**

*Zoë Brogden, NSP Program Coordinator*

Amid the historic splendor of St. Mary's College, Durham, 90 UK-based scholars and guests gathered in the north east of England in April to hear lectures, presentations, enjoy a film screening and to forge new personal networks.

Hailing from 27 countries in the Caucasus, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and South East Asia and currently studying at 15 UK universities from St. Andrews in Scotland to Sussex in the south of England, scholars enjoyed 3 full days break from their hectic study schedules.

St Mary's College played host to the event, with the impressively high-tech University Science Site housing the program events. After welcome remarks from UK Program Manager Vadim Starkov and FCO representative Karyn Osborn, two reflective, inspiring and insightful testimonies on post-scholarship life were shared by OSI Chevening alumni, Meriem Grey (Uzbekistan, University of St. Andrews, 2002-3) and Aida Gevorgyan (Armenia, University of Essex, 2004-5).

Prior to the event, participants had elected to take part in either debate sessions or presentations. The debate sessions, held by experienced trainers Rozi Bako and Gergely Tamasi, enabled scholars to receive comprehensive debate training before pitting their skills in front of their fellow scholars.



*Mohammed Faisal Khokhar holds the floor during the debate training.  
© Zoë Brogden/Open Society Institute.*

During the presentations, scholars showcased a selection of their academic research to date. Four scholars, Bozil Hristov (Bulgaria), Delia Nita (Romania), Aang Abu Bakar (Indonesia) and Senia Febrica (Indonesia) provided insights into such topics as cultural linguistic diversity, Roma protection in the EU, water politics and conflict resolution. The debates and queries which followed proved a fruitful exercise for the screening of director Rex Bloomstein's documentary film *An Independent Mind*. The challenging, emotional and occasionally controversial testimonies depicted in the film stirred the opinions of the scholars and provided food for thought lasting throughout the event.

Further information flowed from the contributions of several guest speakers. Jane McElhone from OSI's Media Program gave a brief introduction to their innovative and timely work, highlighting in particular the work done in Burma in the recent months.

Post-scholarship opportunities were also featured at the gathering: from the Academic Fellowship Program, presented by OSI Budapest's Agnes Molnar- Podmanisky, to NSP's Alumni Grant opportunities, scholars had the opportunity to learn how they can benefit from their link to OSI in the future. Scholars also learned more about the OSI Chevening Hansard Society Research Fellow Program from Ivanna Chakma, Coordinator of the Hansard Scholars Program.

The chance to stay in active contact and collaboration with fellow grantees was presented through an introduction to OSI's KARL intranet and Scholar Forum journal. The practical skills necessary to survive in a competitive academic climate were discussed by CEU lecturer Dr. Sophie Howlett during a workshop on successful grant writing and a presentation of the Special and Extension Programs offered by CEU.

Reconnecting and widening the social network of NSP grantees is a central goal of OSI conferences. Sharing a walk through the cobbled streets of the historic town, exploring the glory of the castle, cathedral and riverside and socializing over a drink and dinner in the unique College environment offered a fitting compliment to the event. More of the same is the hope for spring 2009!

**DAAD-OSI Mid Year Conference: May 2008, Otto von Güricke University, Magdeburg**  
*Zoë Brogden, NSP Program Coordinator*



*Otto von Güricke University.*  
© Zoë Brogden/Open Society Institute.

Under friendly summer skies, the former GDR city of Magdeburg played host to the 2008 DAAD-OSI Mid Year Conference in late May. This year's event was the biggest to date, with over 130 scholars and guests gathering to take part in working groups, hear presentations and lectures from fellow scholars and guest lecturers, and to enjoy the opportunity to connect with scholars from German universities as geographically-dispersed as Bremen and Constance.

The event opened with greetings from Professor Dr. Klaus Erich Pollman, Rector of Otto-van-Güricke University, followed by a short introduction from the new head of the Northern Department of DAAD, Dr. Annette Julius. Olena Prykhodko (Ukraine), a current PhD scholar at the University of Bremen, spoke of her own experience with German academic life. Her confident, friendly approach was mirrored in her address to the audience about the independence and multifaceted learning experience she currently enjoys.

Networking and contacts formed the leading theme of the Conference. Dr. Julius highlighted the importance of keeping in contact with funders and alumni alike at the end of the scholarship period, while Ms. Prykhodko praised large scholarship gatherings as ripe with academic and personal advantages.

The first flame of critical academic debate was lit by Dr. Uwe Halbach (German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin) after his comprehensive insight into European perspectives on the energy and politics of Central Asia and the Caucasus after 1991. Whilst highlighting the problems over water resources, the lack of regional cooperation in Central Asia and the exclusion issue of Armenia in the Baku/Tbillisi/Ceyhan pipeline, he also gave weight to the growing interest of the West in the region, and the resultant need for Europe to invest in cultural exchange with the region. Undoubtedly, DAAD-OSI scholars are aiding that cultural flow between East and West.

The following day saw interesting presentations from each scholar in broad subject working groups. Grouping Politics, Law and Economics scholars together allowed grantees from each subject area to apply their respective expertise in the field after each speech, offering what were sometimes challenging critiques. As Professor Gerlach (Berlin Free University) eloquently summarized after the Law group's presentations, each scholar impressed him with both their general knowledge of the subject area and their excellent knowledge of German. The former will most definitely enable an objective eye to be cast over scholars' native institutions in the future.

DAAD and OSI also used the platform to present opportunities and relay important information to grantees. A highly insightful view into the workings of DAAD was given by Mr. Benedikt Brisch, Manager of the DAAD-OSI Scholarships at DAAD Headquarters in Bonn, whilst George Sharvashidze, from the International Higher Educational Support Program at OSI Budapest presented Academic Fellowship Opportunities. Much debate was fostered from the presentation by Viorel Ursu, Senior Policy Officer at OSI Brussels into the policy and advocacy work of the office in relation to the European Neighbourhood Policy. In addition, scholars also received information about Alumni Grant opportunities following their scholarship period, as well as the partial financial support for those pursuing PhD studies worldwide under NSP's Global Supplementary Grants Program.

On a different note, opportunities for social interaction were readily available. In addition to a photograph competition, where grantees displayed pictures taken during their time in Germany, 'Feierabend' events after formal conference activities provided an excellent opportunity to relax and network with fellow scholarship holders. On an early summer's evening, the Mückenwirt Beer Garden on the Elbe River provided the perfect backdrop to socialize, dance and sing around the camp fire until the small hours, while the spectacular 'Colours of Nature' light show on the Millennium Tower at Elbauen Park helped cement new contacts and heralded the close of a successful and highly enjoyable Conference.



*Campfire at the Mückenwirt Beer Garden, Magdeburg.  
© Zoë Brogden/Open Society Institute.*

The fact that many scholars approaching their final months in Germany viewed the closing of the Conference with heavy hearts is testament to the thoroughly positive experience, both academically and personally, which DAAD-OSI grantees gain from their studies. However, in the age of intranets and email, we hope the chance to forge links with fellow scholars and OSI staff brings fruitful future collaborations!

**Undergraduate Exchange Program Pre-Departure Orientation: July 2008, Istanbul**  
*Ena Sulc, Croatia, University of Washington, 2008-9*

NSP's UEP Pre-Departure Orientation gathered a group of bright sophomores from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Mongolia, Moldova, Serbia and the Ukraine determined to avoid spending a holiday in Turkey. Such a goal demanded an appropriate setting, which we found within the guarded walls of Sabanci University, far enough away from distractions and under the guidance of incredible OSI staff members Anne Campbell and Matthew Wilson. We attended every information session, such as 'Nuts and Bolts of your Grants', 'Cultural Shock',

'Immigration Policy', and last but not least, 'Dating in the States'. Such presentations maintained our inspiration throughout the week, although Anne and Matt did have additional support. Łukas Abramowicz, Angela Alexander, John Harrington and Trisha Hobson helped us get an insight into the American style of teaching. Out of the four different classes offered, each of us attended two per day.

Matej Skaro and Ekaterina Locoman, UEP alumni, provided a good insight into the experience to come through their firsthand experience and patiently answered our questions.

Obligatory volunteering (a linguistic paradox) is something all UEP grantees will pursue during our exchange year. One afternoon during the orientation was dedicated to helping get an idea of what our future projects back home could be.

The cherry on top was our final evening. We all reflected on the fruits of a successfully avoided holiday while gliding over the Bosphorus on a boat called Sanselize (aka Champs Elysees).

As you are reading this we are already seriously involved in studying at some of the best schools in the US. We are becoming bigger and brighter and still have months of development ahead of us!

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### **NSP Summer Schools, July – September 2008**

*Zoë Brogden, NSP Program Coordinator*

In 2008, an increasing number of OSI scholarship holders attended preparatory Pre-Academic Summer Schools and Pre Departure Orientations. Held in July and August at Bilgi and Sabanci Universities, Istanbul and the CEU in Budapest, the events brought together scholars bound for the USA, Great Britain, France and the Netherlands for an intensive and innovative program of social science and humanities-based seminars and academic writing classes. In addition to what was inevitably a rich academic program, scholars had the invaluable opportunity to use the social space to create firm linkages with other grantees, not just within their host university program, but also between other scholars from many countries bound for undergraduate, masters and PhD study across 2 continents.

The following paragraphs give a more in-depth insight into the inaugural Summer Schools for two programs: the Europe-bound OSF Maastricht and CNOUS/OSI scholars.

### **OSF-University of Maastricht Program: August 2008, CEU, Budapest, Hungary**

*Margareta Mamaliga, NSP UK Program Coordinator*

Nine successful candidates for the 2008-09 OSI-University of Maastricht Scholarship program attended a pre-academic summer school in European Studies which introduced scholars to the core concepts and theories of the subject and provide academic writing training, as well as familiarizing scholars with the activities of the Soros Foundations Network. Scholars from Georgia, Moldova and the Ukraine attended lectures and seminars taught by University of Maastricht and Central European University lecturers. Scholars refreshed and consolidated their knowledge of European studies by attending training sessions and pursuing independent reading, thus preparing them for an intensive academic year at Maastricht. A guided visit to the Central European University and the Open Society Archives in Budapest was organised, and provided scholars with an excellent opportunity to network in the beautiful city of Budapest!

## **CNOUS/OSI Program, July 2008 – L’université d’été à Istanbul**

*Celine Keshishian, NSP Program Manager*

Allaying all fears about the dominance of the English language at the NSP Summer School, incoming CNOUS/OSI scholars seemed very pleased to meet the extended OSI network, including UK-bound students and professors.

Three French professors provided classes on méthodologie, while students were most grateful to alumni Sergey Uzhegov (Kazakhstan) and Zulaika Esentaeva (Kyrgyzstan) who prepared a very detailed account of their experiences living, studying, and interning in France. Since graduating in 2006, Sergey returned to Kazakhstan and began working with Citibank in Almaty while simultaneously beginning a doctoral program at the Sorbonne. Zulaika recently returned to Bishkek where she began working with the Public Health Program at the Soros Foundation – Kyrgyzstan.

This year’s grantees are studying in Grenoble, Lille, Lyon, Nancy, Strasbourg, and Toulouse.



*The 2008-9 CNOUS/OSI Fellows.*

*© Zarina Usmanova/Open Society Institute.*

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## **Alumni Grant Program 2007-2008 – Highlights**

*Celine Keshishian, NSP Program Manager*

NSP supported 12 Alumni Grant Program projects in 2007 – 2008. Two brief highlights below outline the impact scholars had in multiple ways through the modest funding NSP provided last year.

### **Project Title: “Curriculum Development Regarding Problems of HIV/AIDS/STI”, Altantsetseg Batsukh and Oyut Erdene Namdaldagva, Social Work Program, Mongolia**

The Mongolian-based project aimed to develop a curriculum which addressed issues of HIV, AIDS, and other STIs by incorporating them into university social work undergraduate programs between February and August 2008. Their main partner was the National AIDS Foundation of Mongolia where Ms. Altantsetseg works as an executive director. Other collaborators included the Mongolian Association of Social Work Educators, the Health Science University of Mongolia, the Mongolian State University of Education, and the National University of Mongolia. The project team successfully mobilized funds from other sources in Mongolia which will help them complete

the curriculum and incorporate it into existing social work programs and build the capacity of faculty members which began in the Fall of 2008.

**Project Title: “Business Case Study Competition 2008”, Vitalie Dascal, UEP, Moldova**

Improving the linkage between academic and business environments was the main focus of the project, which incorporated 12 of the best students from the business field, giving them the chance to solve a real-life case study, make presentations in front of a jury composed of specialists from various sectors and interact with representatives from various companies, including HR managers. The continuity of the project in 2009 will be assured by World University Service Austria (WUS). WUS, through its local representation, the Association of Moldavian Students from the Republic of Moldova (ASM), will run the competition for the next 4 years and beyond.

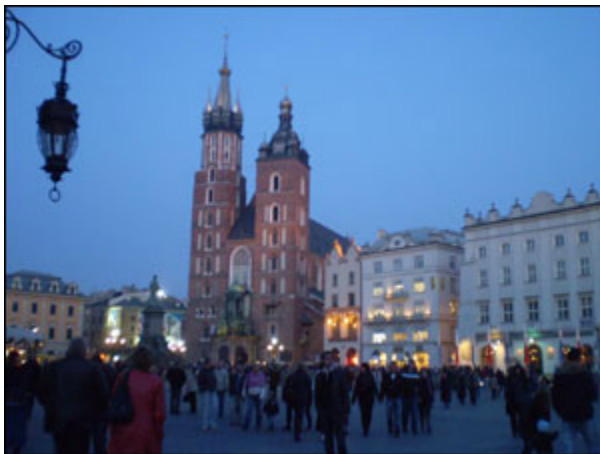
**2008-9 Alumni Grant Recipients**

NSP is extremely pleased to announce that a new cohort of NSP alumni have successfully received a grant to develop their unique development projects ideas. 14 finalists from the 44 project applications will carry out projects in Croatia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Burma, Serbia and Slovakia, in areas ranging from establishing a school of social work to organizing political debate trainings. More detailed information on their progress will be available in upcoming NSP Newsletters.

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**OSI Regional Alumni Conference: Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia, November 2008, Krakow, Poland**

*Zoë Brogden, NSP Program Coordinator*



*Krakow*

*© Zoë Brogden/Open Society Institute.*

The NSP Conference season culminated in the gathering of alumni from Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia in the historic Polish city of Krakow at the beginning of November. Under the theme of Educational Issues in the Technological Age, alumni from the OSI Chevening, Hospitality, Undergraduate Exchange and Supplementary Grant Programs ranging back to 1986, participated in seminars, held and attended presentations and engaged in animated panel discussions on topics highly relevant to the contemporary educational setting.



As alumni arrived at the venue in central Krakow, Ewa Kuliik-Bielinska, Deputy Director of the Stefan Batory Foundation, Warsaw, opened the event with a welcome speech and an update on Foundation activities while alumni reconnected over drinks and canapés. For the Polish alumni present, the choice of guest speaker could not have been more apt in view of the strong attachment many have with the Batory Foundation, which was often the first contact they had with OSI. The central theme of the conference, technological advancements and their impact in relation to education, was suitably introduced by Dr. Alek Tarkowski, Coordinator at the Creative Commons initiative in Warsaw. Alek delivered a thought-provoking and accessible introduction to the work of Creative Commons. The following panel comprised an impressive range of thinkers in the field: Jarosław Lipszyc, President of Modern Poland Foundation, Noel Selegzi, Director of OSI Youth Initiatives, and Jan Marković of the e-Learning Centre at the Krakow AGH University. All panelists presented the work of their projects before opening the floor to a lively question and answer session with the alumni.



*Ales Vlk (Czech Republic, UEP 1994) presents his “Case Study of a Tertiary Education Reform in the Czech Republic.”  
© Zoë Brogden/Open Society Institute.*

Alumni presentations formed an integral part of the conference, with topics ranging between innovations in Polish libraries, gender disparities at the classroom and faculty level, innovative games of logic and a short film. Pavol Kohut, a UEP alum from Slovakia, screened a \ 20-minute film produced during his scholarship entitled “My Story and Adrian Adorno”, which was well received by the audience.



*A group busy at work during Jacek Sypniewski’s (Poland, OSI Chevening University of*

Edinburgh, 1997) interactive presentation: *"Interactive Games as a Learning Tool"*.  
© Zoë Brogden/Open Society Institute.

The conference culminated on Sunday with OSI program presentations by Celine Keshishian of OSF London and Zoë Brogden and Noel Selegzi from OSI New York. On a slightly different angle, a selection of photographs, taken over the course of the last 20 years in countries witnessing the fall of the Iron Curtain were showcased by OSI East East Program Director, Mary Frances Lindstrom. The powerful images of everyday life provoked a strong reaction amongst the audience. Alumni, including former Oxford Hospitality grantee Joanna Minksztyl, provided some excellent personal photographs from the times of transition in the region.

A fitting final presentation was provided by a lunchtime keynote speech by Dr. Sara Hennessey, Researcher at the University of Cambridge, England. By bringing the conference full circle to outline current research and innovative technical aids used in the classroom setting, alumni left Krakow for the long journey home with new contacts and networks, a renewed connection to OSI and in some cases, inspiration for new professional developments in the area of educational practice.

NSP program staff would like to extend their sincerest thanks to all the alumni and guests who made the weekend in Krakow an enjoyable and insightful one for all involved and we look forward with renewed fervor to our next alumni conference!

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## **Program News and Announcements**

### **DAAD – Country Expansion**

The DAAD-OSI program is pleased to announce an expansion into 7 new countries in the Balkans starting with the 2009-10 academic year. Successfully chosen applicants from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo will take up a variety of Masters Courses and PhD Studies at various German Universities in 2009-10. As is the rotating pattern of advertising for this program, a new call for applications for the 2010-11 academic year will be made in Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia in late summer 2009. Please the program guidelines for more detailed information: [www.soros.org/initiatives/scholarship/focus\\_areas/daad/guidelines](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/scholarship/focus_areas/daad/guidelines)

### **Farewell to the Soros Supplementary Grant Program (SSGP)**

After 11 years, the Soros Supplementary Grant Program (SSGP) funded its last cohort in spring 2008. The program was created to assist citizens of Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Mongolia in pursuing advanced study within the region but outside of their home countries. The goal was to support cross-cultural, intraregional student mobility as part of OSI's overall efforts to strengthen the academic network within and between these countries.

SSGP initially offered grants to individuals from 28 countries to pursue Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral degrees within the region but outside of their home country. The program prioritized otherwise marginalized students, including Roma and displaced persons, encouraging their access to mainstream higher education.

SSGP supported 1,766 grants. Alumni remain active in promoting open society values by working as artists, musicians, professors, and policy-makers within Eurasia. We would like to congratulate all SSGP alumni and thank them for their contribution to the region!

## Program Update: Global Supplementary Grant Program (GSGP) Europe

Beginning in the 2008 – 2009 academic year, the Global Supplementary Grant Program (GSGP) for fellows pursuing doctoral studies within Europe will be administered by NSP-London. All candidates may contact the London office with questions. New applications will be due in April and June 2009 and more information, including information on the application process is available at: [www.soros.org/initiatives/scholarship/focus\\_areas/global\\_supplementary/guidelines](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/scholarship/focus_areas/global_supplementary/guidelines)

## OSI Afghan Communications Scholarship

The Afghan Communications Scholarship provides fully funded fellowships to qualified citizens of Afghanistan to complete a two-year MA in Communications at the University of Ottawa / l'Université d'Ottawa. The program provides the opportunity for post-graduate study in Canada for journalists and communications professionals who demonstrate both academic and professional excellence and the potential to become leaders, decision-makers and agents of change.

The Master's program is offered in French and English, with two fields of specialization: Media Studies and Organizational Communication.

For more detailed information, please visit:

[www.soros.org/initiatives/scholarship/focus\\_areas/afghan/guidelines](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/scholarship/focus_areas/afghan/guidelines)

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**For more detailed information, deadlines, and announcements pertaining to all Scholarship Programs, please visit: [www.soros.org/initiatives/scholarship/focus\\_areas](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/scholarship/focus_areas)**

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