

## Conclusion: Pathways Revisited

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### 19.1 INTRODUCTION

This book grapples with the fundamental question of whether international scholarships serve as a vehicle for positive social change. Rather than offer a single answer, we have explored the particular conditions and specific ways in which diverse pathways are manifest. These reflections and analyses are based on extensive practice and research about international scholarship programs. While acknowledging a series of difficulties in both design and data collection, authors writing from different regional and professional perspectives confirm the book's thesis: there are numerous pathways by which scholarship programs and award recipients break down barriers and foster positive change.

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Turning the spotlight on international scholarships as a subject for analysis has revealed a number of themes, remarkably consistent, and illuminating both the enduring qualities of scholarships as well as their multi-faceted relationship to social change and evolving models of higher education. We examine these themes in the remainder of the first section. In the second section, we highlight the policy and programming choices that can enhance the social change impacts of international scholarship programs. Finally, in section three, we propose a future research agenda and practical steps to build a community of researchers for this nascent field.

### *19.1.1 Continuity and Innovation*

As both a policy instrument and a funding mechanism, scholarships are remarkably durable and adaptable. As John Kirkland observes, the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, established in 1959, has “maintain [ed] its high profile, whilst continually responding to changing environments” (Chap. 8). This ability to balance continuity and innovation is the hallmark of many long-standing programs, including iconic examples—such as Rhodes and Fulbright—that are indelibly associated with the word ‘scholarship’.

One consequence of this longevity and adaptability is that the universe of international scholarships is varied to the point of fragmentation, reflecting the capacity of these financial instruments to serve a wide array of objectives and adapt to changing circumstances. The variation also reflects a lack of coordination among sponsors, which include both state and non-state actors who differ in the scope and purpose of their investments. Developed countries frequently invest under the broad mantle of international development but also expect to see their investment benefit domestic higher education systems (where incoming scholarship students are usually required to study) and yield longer-term returns in public diplomacy, ‘brain gain’ and trade. Developing countries, in contrast, typically justify the expenditure of public funds on international scholarships for their own citizens to study abroad as a means to build scientific, institutional and technical capacity in key areas for growth and development or, in the case of support for inbound students, as a means to increase their influence abroad.

This broad array of motivations and aims, combined with an increasingly multipolar world of international study destinations, makes it difficult to

trace a straight line from any given international scholarship program to a broader set of impacts. As Kent observes, this complexity has been recognised elsewhere:

Scholarships ... sit in an undefined academic space, somewhere between development, education and public diplomacy. They are studied across faculties, or by interdisciplinary researchers. It is perhaps this undefined space that has allowed for scholarships to remain relatively under-researched, although this is changing. International students and the role they play in the world of foreign relations is *'not a terrain of neat paths and well-trodden methodologies, but it seems to have dawned as a field of study'* (Lowe cited in Kent, Chap. 2).

The terrain is unlikely to become any neater in the near future, with new scholarship programs emerging and traditional programs being progressively reconfigured.

Another perennial issue raised by individual scholarships is their relationship to institutional support in target countries. Donors often confront trade-offs between investment in developing country higher education institutions and international scholarships oriented toward individual change agents. From a sustainable development point of view, which is most effective? Combining individual scholarships and institutional investments is compelling in theory but difficult to achieve in practice. Boeren (Chap. 3) analyzes the experience of European Union and bilateral scholarship and capacity-building programs and suggests that a hybrid, 'orchestrated' approach can reap substantial rewards, but requires a rarely found longer-term perspective and willingness to share or cede control over operations.

Similar trade-offs stem from the relative benefits of international exposure versus study in regional higher education hubs that are emerging in the developing world, for example, in the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa and China. Increasingly, intra-regional mobility—often twinned with higher education investment in developing countries—is being funded with the intention to develop many of the same qualities as traditional scholarship programs that support study in high-income countries. Intra-regional scholarships present a substantial challenge to the status quo: study in intra-regional institutions is almost always less expensive to fund and may help to address long-standing concerns about the social context in which knowledge is generated and transferred. Yet intra-regional exchanges raise quality and capacity concerns, as

Kajunju (Chap. 17) and Mansukhani (Chap. 18) have outlined in the African and Indian contexts.

### 19.1.2 *Defining and Identifying ‘Social Impact’*

From roughly the year 2000 onward, a burst of research on international scholarships has developed in response to major trends in higher education and in development funding. These trends include: the ‘rediscovery’ of higher education by the international development community after decades of priority investment and research in primary education; greater focus by donors on measurable outcomes, accountability and ‘value for money’; and advances in both empirical investigation and research methodologies. Matt Mawer summarizes the state of the art in this research, while Mirka Martel provides an overview of evaluation methodologies. Their chapters make clear that more empirical information about scholarship outcomes, especially at the individual recipient level and focused on career advancement, is now available. More rigorous evaluation methodologies, including counterfactual data on non-recipients and longitudinal studies that will allow programs’ long-term effects to emerge over time, are still not the norm but are becoming more common.

The upturn in research interest, and concurrent policymaking interest, have begun to raise more nuanced questions about what is meant by the ‘social impact’ aims of scholarship programs. Dassin and Navarrete argue that the social impact of individual scholarship holders is more of an ‘idealized trajectory’ (Chap. 15) than a demonstrated relationship. One reason is the common failure of both international and national programs to gather the necessary data to analyze the specific circumstances under which individual recipients begin their educational and professional journeys and the diverse contexts to which they return.

A facet of beneficiaries’ trajectories that has garnered extensive interest is the relationship between social impact and returning home. Marsh and Uwaifo (Chap. 11) argue that although brain drain still has significant negative effects on some of the world’s poorest countries, *physical* return of scholarship recipients to their home countries is not necessarily synonymous with impact. New trends are emerging that complicate this linear trajectory. First, return migration to emerging economies such as China and India is increasing, while ‘brain circulation’ and ‘brain gain’ are resulting from increased competition for global talent, particularly where governments have enacted programs that encourage citizens living abroad to be

involved in national development. Second, recipients' home countries may be in the throes of economic and political crises, prolonged conflict or authoritarian regimes—situations hardly conducive to eager graduates' plans for social change. Such plans may be better advanced by a strategic 'delayed return' (Marsh et al. 2016) to take advantage of career opportunities and, in many cases, continuing access to international networks and resources for creating social enterprises that benefit home countries.

The conditions scholarship programs impose for the post-graduation return of recipients to their countries of origin are closely linked with theories of change that build from the individual to spheres of society where needs are greatest. Both historically and at present, this relationship typically equates scholarship beneficiaries' social impact with returning to, and remaining in, their country of origin. Yet "...the growing potential of diaspora and transnational communities to stimulate economic development and social change" (Marsh and Uwaifo, Chap. 11) is challenging this fixed idea. Evidence from this book suggests that both individual agency and societal transformation may be undermined when scholarships have inflexible conditionality requirements around returning home, at least in the short term (Campbell, Chap. 9). A recommendation for greater flexibility need not be inconsistent with 'social contracts' between scholarship providers and recipients. Rather, it acknowledges the limitations of planning an 'idealized trajectory' and recognizes heterogeneity in scholars' ambitions and learning priorities, their employment options, and in the dynamic nature of socially meaningful work open to highly skilled and committed graduates.

Defining and identifying social impact is highly dependent on particular contexts. Examples of the need for specificity in analyzing 'social impacts' recur throughout the book: in approaches to finding the appropriate candidates for targeted scholarships; in the guidance offered during academic programs to support scholarship recipients' subsequent socially-oriented work; in the latitude given by program designers for individual beneficiaries to determine their own post-scholarship trajectories; and in the approaches of evaluators to understanding the link between individual action and broader impacts on communities, institutions and society. There is currently no unified view on most of these topics, reflecting the varied aims of scholarship programs, the diversity of contexts and the contingencies and variations of individual agency. Rather than seeking oversimplified formulas, we are encouraged by the extent to which these questions are increasingly

being addressed at the highest levels of program design, implementation and evaluation.

## 19.2 POLICY AND PROGRAMMING IMPLICATIONS

In the current global political environment, public resources for foreign affairs and international development will be hotly contested and may be reduced or redirected. How funding for international scholarships will be affected is an empirical question yet to unfold, but one this book may influence. Population growth and a globally expanding middle class will propel increased demand for higher education in countries worldwide. Internationalization of higher education is likely to keep pace, and scholarships—often the fulcrum of higher education access strategies—will likewise experience greater demand. Inevitably, concerns will arise about trade-offs between the ‘quantity’ of scholarships and ‘quality’ of beneficiaries’ experiences, with their associated comprehensive (and resource-intensive) support. This book provides some important guidance to those involved in these vexing policy decisions.

To draw together the international scholarship policy and programming implications of the book, we return to the framework outlined in our introduction: the ‘change agent’, ‘social network’, ‘widening access’, ‘academic diversity’ and ‘international understanding’ pathways by which scholarships lead to social change. We avoid prescribing specific recommendations given the wide diversity in scholarship program goals and priorities described earlier, allowing the evidence from the text itself to provide useful lessons for best practice and effective policy.

### 19.2.1 *Change Agents*

Program funders, particularly private foundations, are increasingly attentive to design elements that strengthen their programs’ social change impacts. Most important are selection processes that seek candidates with outstanding records of community service and leadership capacity as well as traditional academic achievement, as documented by Everlyn Anyal in her chapter on ‘Selecting Leaders’. As an example, the Ford Foundation International Scholarships Program (IFP) adopted a strategy to select social justice leaders from marginalized or excluded communities throughout the developing world for graduate degrees at universities of their choice (see also Manukhani, Chap. 18). The intention was to enable grassroots

leaders to transcend discrimination and become powerful agents for change. In IFP and in other programs, design features such as preparatory training in languages, placement and mentorship support, activities to strengthen social and professional networks and—as Martha Loerke argues in her chapter on ‘Facilitating Post-Study Transitions’—support for successful post-study transitions to home countries, can help prepare individual beneficiaries to succeed not only in their studies but also as change agents after graduation.

Scholarship program managers and funders also debate the level of education that scholarships should fund. These debates are increasingly based on new data and evidence linking certain programmatic decisions with likely outcomes that most reinforce the formation of ‘change agents’. For example, many donors prefer scholarships for master-level degrees because of lower cost, historically higher rates of return (as compared to PhDs and undergraduates) and these programs’ typical focus on practical skills for social and economic development. However, while doctoral education is expensive, evidence from past doctoral-level scholarship programs (e.g. AFGRAD - African Graduate Fellowship Program, Rockefeller, Fulbright, Commonwealth Scholarships, and more) shows significant and enduring gains for academic institutions to which recipients return. The Brazil case study in this book, on *Ciências sem Fronteiras*, counters that investment in undergraduate programs furthers young peoples’ exposure to new ideas, pedagogies and cultures: “Investing in younger students – at least in hypothetical terms – was understood as an investment in broader social change, and not simply in human capital formation or scientific development” (Zahler and Menino, Chap. 4). These examples demonstrate that international scholarships at all levels can play an important role in preparing ‘social change’ agents. Under scarcer resource environments, however, it may be necessary for international scholarship programs to share and coordinate their efforts to cover individual beneficiaries at different levels of study.

Catalyzing social change through individuals is an indirect and often long-term process, requiring that scholarship programs accept the non-linear trajectories of individuals and their social groups and movements along the way. Pressures for short-term gain and immediate return on investment are likely to be counterproductive for achieving hard-won social change in challenging environments, such as post-conflict societies. As Brodgen puts it, “Having patience in this process is key” (Chap. 7). In practice, this means that scholarship programs must be tied to longer cycles of investment and evaluation than is typically the case.

### 19.2.2 *Social Networks*

Throughout this book, references have been made to the potential, but often under-tapped, power of alumni networks (and social networks generally) to support individual scholarship recipients and their social movements. Marsh and Oyelere's review of the 'brain drain' debate points to the supportive role of international professional networks for scholarship recipients who return home and remain connected. An important part of post-graduation support is to maintain contact with alumni temporarily or permanently residing in the diaspora and to facilitate their connections with fellow alumni who have returned home. The Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program (Foulds and Zeleza 2014) is an example of a mechanism linking academics across continents that could be adapted to other transnational alumni groups.

Loerke strongly recommends adequate attention and financial support for post-graduation 'enhancements', including alumni networks: "Apart from strengthening individual beneficiaries' capacities, the need to create networks and support systems for these social change leaders ensures that they will encounter a more powerful platform from which to effect positive systemic change once they have completed their studies" (Chap. 10). Alumni of international scholarship programs can also use their connections to promote mutually beneficial outcomes for both their host and home countries. In the best of situations, alumni willingly serve as 'ambassadors' of their alma mater institutions (or fellowship programs) for recruiting new generations of students. In some cases, they are also in an advantageous position to foster positive economic and trade relationships for their home countries (see Boeren, Chap. 3, for examples from Western Europe).

### 19.2.3 *Widening Access*

One of the most promising and direct routes from individual scholarships to social change is the 'widening access' pathway. As Dassin and Navarrete argue, "international scholarship programs may *in themselves* generate significant social change" by directing resources to individuals who are under-represented in higher education (Chap. 15). The IFP, the MasterCard Foundation's Scholars Program and the Gates Millennium Scholars Program, discussed in the book, are directed to members of low-income communities, women and girls, religious, racial, ethnic and religious minorities or other marginalized groups. Evidence from these and other programs



strongly suggest that targeted scholarships can produce role models for families and communities, create new clusters of qualified professionals, affect leadership structures, transform institutions and create more social inclusion in hierarchical and unequal societies. Martel and Bhandari's (2016) research on IFP demonstrates that proactive outreach and recruitment of high potential and socially committed members of marginalized communities for quality tertiary study can accelerate social mobility and change in their communities of origin.

Various authors touch on the critical issue of whether international scholarships are successful in widening access or simply entrench existing elites. Historical focus on granting scholarships to students who can readily gain admission to highly competitive universities in OECD destination countries may be counterproductive for programs committed to opening up opportunities to non-elite communities. Kent sums up the problem: "...While there are some scholarship programs that work to attract and support those students who are less able to access these existing opportunities, the elite nature of the Western university system creates a significant barrier" (Chap. 2).

This underlying barrier can severely blunt the impact of international scholarships as a vehicle for widening access to quality tertiary education. Some exceptions prevail, such as those few programs that are able to persuade highly selective host universities to adopt more comprehensive and inclusive admission criteria and also provide enhanced academic and support services to non-traditional students. Kent points to scholarship programs that fund pre-study language instruction as another partially successful way to raise admission rates for non-elites from developing countries.

#### *19.2.4 Academic Diversity*

Scholarship programs may also leverage their financial power and prestige to persuade host universities to recruit students 'widely' and 'deeply'. Anyal (Chap. 5) discusses a parallel pathway to social change through increased academic diversity on the dozens of host university campuses that received IFP fellows. The partnerships between the MasterCard Foundation and higher education institutions in both developed and developing countries provide further examples. The greatest gains from this pathway are won when the host university fully embraces the opportunity for integrating

non-traditional students into their communities and creates programs for meaningful cross-learning interactions.

Baxter (Chap. 6) advises that scholarship programs work closely with host universities to ensure that non-academic scholarship goals, such as leadership development, intercultural competency and exposure to civic participation and volunteerism, are built into the university experience. This is a departure from the conventional ‘hands-off’ approach of most scholarship programs when it comes to guiding university-sponsored activities. The case studies of the Open Society Foundations’ and MasterCard Foundation’s programs demonstrate significant benefits for international students when their host universities show flexibility and interest in partnering with scholarship programming staff, and the students themselves, on curricular and extracurricular design, including service learning.

The prevailing ‘hands-off’ position carries forward into scholarship evaluation and impact assessment, where the details and nuances of the university experience are rarely captured, undermining our understanding of the relative impacts of different host institutions on post-graduation outcomes. Dassin and Navarrete (Chap. 15) argue that these details are vital to unpacking the ‘black box’ of educational experience and to understanding how the knowledge and skills acquired in their academic programs affect scholarship recipients’ post-study activities and social impacts.

### 19.2.5 *International Understanding*

Taken together, the case studies in this book demonstrate the value of an international education for participation in the global economy and knowledge networks and for improving intercultural competencies and international understanding. The cases from Brazil and China highlight those respective governments’ priorities for upgrading training in the STEM fields through international education, while the Open Society Foundations and MasterCard Foundation scholarship programs emphasize exposure to diverse cultures and critical thinking to build student capacities for contesting intolerance and creating more innovative and inclusive models for economic growth. The Commonwealth Scholarships have evolved over time to reflect the changing priorities of UK foreign policy, with ‘public diplomacy’ and ‘merit-based’ scholarships having precedence until 2000, and programming that furthers ‘access’ and ‘development’ goals taking priority since then.

Assertions that international scholarships also contribute to the national interests of donor countries are often made (see Boeren, Chap. 3). From a

purely economic standpoint, this book amply illustrates the benefits of shoring up local academic institutions with needed funds and stellar students as well as future talent retention where it is most needed. Politically, international education is historically linked with building mutual respect at a deeper level than more cursory diplomatic exchanges. Yet conclusively establishing that international scholarship programs lead to greater understanding among host and sending nations is empirically elusive and therefore vulnerable to critique.

Moreover, we cannot assume a public consensus in favor of the internationalization of education and investment in international scholarships as contributing to the national interest of donor countries. In fact, the traditional ‘soft power’ rationale for increased international engagement, and foreign aid more generally, is currently under assault in many of the countries and institutions where we live and work. The case for greater investment in international scholarships must be strengthened as part of the emerging field and research agenda framed by this book, not the least to present better evidence of their long-term value for both donors and recipients. In making this case, one research question to include is who are the intra-societal ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ from internationalization of education and international scholarships?

Despite certain political trends to the contrary, there is no turning back on the technological and information revolutions that have fueled our ever-smaller globe. Recipients of international education, many funded by scholarships, have developed the expertise and networks to bring these revolutions into their home countries and adapt them for broad economic and social benefits. ‘Brain circulation’ is slowly but surely taking the place of ‘brain drain’, and hybrid, transnational education is gaining popularity. The studies in this book affirm that the human relationships and professional networks forged through student mobility have been—and can continue to be—a potent countervailing force against inward-looking, closed-border policies. In this sense, the international understanding pathway to social change may be the most valuable of all.

### 19.3 TOWARD A FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

Considering the future of research and evidence about scholarship programs is particularly timely. The launch of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 4b—to “...substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries...” (United Nations

2015)—connects research on scholarship programs to international development at the highest level. The SDGs are not the only underpinning for our research agenda, as several constituencies now have a stake in firmer and deeper evidence about the social impact of international scholarships. Still, the SDGs are a powerful reminder that research on scholarship programs has the potential to shape widely accepted global goals like “...*inclusive and equitable quality education and...lifelong learning opportunities for all*” (United Nations 2015).

International scholarship programs sit at the intersection of several research fields. They are a facet of international higher education, concerned with expanding access and exposure to quality academic studies abroad and internationalization of education more broadly. Scholarship programs are also a vehicle for international development and the delivery of aid agendas, whether of national governments, supranational bodies such as the United Nations or private foundations. Especially for national governments, scholarship programs are an instrument of international relations, public diplomacy and ‘manufacturing sympathy’ (Wilson 2014) within foreign nations. In their operation and effects, scholarship programs cross into areas of labor economics and international migration studies, organizational studies, pedagogic design, cross-cultural psychology and numerous other disciplines. The calculus of scholarship program return on investment—something we have not discussed at length in this book—is grounded in development and educational economics. These are the threads from which the emerging sub-field of research on international scholarship programs is being woven.

In some cases, research and evaluation are now incorporated into the initial program design, a clear advantage for assessing long-term impacts. Whether through a decade-long partnership with academic consultants (e.g. Enders and Kottman 2013) or a small in-house research team (e.g. Mawer et al. 2016), it is difficult to over-estimate the usefulness of thinking about research and evaluation *early* and *during* scholarship programs.

### 19.3.1 *Questions/Future Directions*

The intention of SDG target 4b is to improve access to high-quality tertiary education in countries where it is not widely available and where the chronic shortage of highly educated individuals is a barrier to development. Yet, for reasons covered extensively in this book, the success or failure of scholarships as pathways for social change relies on more than their mere

availability. These complexities open opportunities for research to be conducted and for advocacy to shape policy, especially within the state sector, where governments, having signed on to the SDGs, have more direct accountability for working toward their implementation.

The most immediate, and perpetual, research question is ‘who should be funded?’ This question has been answered in the mission statements and selection processes of scholarships but it has not been convincingly answered in the context of scholarship *outcomes*. Scholarship programs frequently face policy choices about their commitment to widening access: the choice of investing in the marginalized and the non-marginalized (sometimes even the elites) of societies. Research has an important role in providing data that can illuminate what kinds of social change can be achieved by investing in dominant groups or in underserved communities. More generally, “the lack of detailed analysis on the “access and social mobility” dimensions of international scholarship programs” (Mawer, Chap. 13) makes it difficult to answer this question empirically.

A related research question is about the kinds of educational institutions and academic programs that most effectively foster social change. Many programs have sought to place students based largely on the host universities’ prestige: the social change commitments of individual academic programs (and individual academics) have rarely been a criterion in selection. Kent (Chap. 2), for example, highlights the focus on top-50 ranked institutions as destinations for Saudi Arabian scholarship recipients. Large philanthropic grants also tend to be invested in high-prestige institutions: the Gates Cambridge scholarships, Stanford’s Knight-Hennessy scholarships and the Schwarzman Scholars at Tsinghua University, to name just a few. Many questions are raised by the choice of institutional hosts for scholarships. Aryn Baxter (Chap. 6), for instance, cites examples from the Higher Education Research and Advocacy Network in Africa (HERANA) on how local and regional institutions within Africa promote civic participation and political awareness among their students. Further research should set out to identify higher education institutions with these values, to inform scholarship funders’ choices of host institutions while not compromising academic quality.

It is also unclear that the benefits associated with international exposure would necessarily be reduced with intra-regional or South-South scholarships. A strong case has been made for the benefits of international education, but the case for these scholarships being hosted (predominately) in the high-income countries of Northern Europe and North America is less

robust. Increasingly, intra-regional mobility is being funded with the intention to develop many of the same qualities as ‘traditional’ scholarship programs: roughly two-thirds of undergraduate MasterCard Foundation Scholars, for instance, are undertaking their degrees at African institutions (MCF 2016). The full consequences of these shifts require further research and analysis.

A more fundamental research question is the role of scholarship programs within the shifting global landscape of higher education. As we noted in our introduction to this book, fast-paced technological change and the rising demand for higher education and shifts in skilled labor market needs are the backdrop to our analysis. Important questions are raised for the operation of scholarship programs: what will be the relationship between scholarship funding and participation in new course models, including Massive Open Online Courseware (MOOCs) and their successors, or study programs organized by consortia of local institutions? How can scholarship programs more effectively reach out to refugee and migrant populations, whose higher education is frequently disrupted or deferred by dislocation and yet who are often vital to rebuilding their home countries? To what extent can scholarship programs, particularly state-funded programs, work with for-profit private institutions and with what impacts (if any) for individual and social change outcomes? These are topics to which we have alluded in this book but have not explored in depth: they are part of the future of scholarship programs and thus should be at the forefront of a future research agenda.

### 19.3.2 *Research Approaches*

There are many pressing issues about researching scholarship programs but perhaps the most pervasive and significant is the need for more in-depth consideration of ‘second-order effects’: that is, the impact of individual recipients on those around them. Existing research can tell us more about the impact of scholarships on their immediate beneficiaries than on how these gains are turned into social change within communities or organizations. Existing research is also largely ineffective at explaining the *impact* of social change within communities or organizations. We know, for instance, far more about the propensity of scholarship recipients to teach at educational institutions than we do about the impacts of their teaching on the next generation and, in turn, the impact of the next generation on their communities and organizations.

Several contributors—notably Martel, Mawer, Dassin and Navarrete—have observed the difficulty with this individual unit of analysis and advocate, variously, for models that include impact beyond the individual or research designs that conceive of individual recipients in terms of their membership in social groups and leadership of social movements. One potential route to establishing greater contextual detail is to promote investment in fieldwork, especially richly detailed qualitative research. The historic reliance on self-reported surveys within scholarship evaluation is pragmatic but has deficits, several of which are outlined by Martel (Chap. 14). Dassin and Navarrete (Chap. 15) advocate what might be labeled the ‘gold standard’ for individual studies in the field: “*To properly trace and comprehend . . . specificities, and their meaning for social change impacts, qualitative field research in each country or region should be conducted with the support of local researchers, including former scholarship holders*”. If combined with appropriately designed and rigorously collected quantitative data, these field studies at the local level will be much better placed to provide the analytical sophistication required to underpin evidence-led policy.

Attention to the status of qualitative fieldwork also highlights another concern: there are not enough voices from developing countries involved in scholarship research. Much of the existing research has been funded by donors or by administering organizations in high-income countries, often drawing on the services of consultancy firms co-located with those organizations. Employing trusted consultants with an understanding of the funding and policy contexts of the donor country is attractive for various reasons, but it cannot provide a substitute for local understanding if research on program experiences and outcomes is to be rich and sensitive to context. There are, for instance, well-recognized cross-cultural challenges in research methodology (see Martel, Chap. 14). Greater involvement of research partners outside of the high-income donor countries is a priority for developing a more sophisticated and contextually relevant understanding of scholarship impacts.

Immediate questions are raised by these suggestions: who will do the work? And who will fund the work? While these issues are largely beyond the scope of the current book, we believe that dedicated consortia of academic researchers can have a major role in advancing the cause of cross-program research. Additionally, program donors and administrators may find common cause in contributing to a research field if it promises a fundamental knowledge-base to improve scholarship outcomes.

Collaboration among consortia of researchers and/or program donors can achieve two goals that are otherwise largely elusive: (a) it can compare outcomes across programs and help to establish the differential impacts of funding, selection and post-graduation support models; and (2) it can explore issues about which informed commentary requires large datasets, such as factors influencing return decisions or the macro-economic effect of scholarship programs on sending countries. At a macro-level, supranational bodies may be open to a coherent proposal for detailed cross-sectional studies of scholarship program impacts. UNESCO's commissioning of baseline research for SDG goal 4b (e.g. Balfour 2016; IIE 2016) and the continuing need to monitor progress against this goal's short deadline (2020) suggest an opening for relevant research funding and a forum for dissemination.

### *19.3.3 Sharing Findings and Sustaining the Field*

After examining these research issues, it is important to reiterate a point made earlier in the book: “*Too often evaluations of international scholarship programs are completed and remain for internal use of donors only*” (Martel, Chap. 14). Research should be made available to all stakeholders to the greatest extent possible for several reasons: first, because such research can be part of the wider accountability process for expenditure; second, because most scholarship programs are part of ‘public policy’ and so efforts should be made to encourage critical awareness among the ‘public’; and third, because sharing findings will allow scholarship decision makers around the world to draw on a more extensive knowledge-base to underpin policy and programming decisions. In this area, there is an imperative to make progress. As various contributors to this book have made clear, program evaluations focused on only one scholarship scheme, without peer critique, and often unpublished, do not provide a robust evidential basis for investments of USD billions globally.

Some modest steps can be recommended to generate improvement:

1. Academic authors can offer pre-publication versions of journal articles on scholarship-related research, either on their personal websites or by direct correspondence with existing mailing lists of interested parties. Alternatively, subject to continuing progress in the accessibility of research, relevant articles might be published in open-access journals that do not charge for subscription.



2. Program evaluations commissioned by public agencies and private foundations should be made available to others wherever possible, regardless of their conclusions. These reports should not be partially or completely withheld if they do not completely validate the program's success. One innovative arrangement, albeit after the conclusion of a program, is the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program archives at Columbia University, New York, in which most of the program documentation from over a decade of scholarship grantmaking is publicly accessible.<sup>1</sup>
3. A detailed bibliography of published research on scholarship programs should be actively curated and made publicly available. Much significant insight is housed in 'grey literature' that is not indexed by bibliographic databases.

Only by taking steps to create and sustain a dynamic network of researchers, policy makers and practitioners collaborating to understand and improve international scholarship programs can these critical interventions ever reach their potential. The collegiate construction of this book—representing cross-cutting professions, organizations and sectors from different parts of the world—provides ample evidence that such collaboration can be fruitful in advancing research and building a responsive community dedicated to international scholarships and the multiple pathways they open to social change.

## NOTE

1. The IFP archives are housed by Columbia University Libraries: <https://dlc.library.columbia.edu/ifp>. The volume of information made available can be gauged somewhat by this quotation from one of the 22 country offices: "*The IFP China office was closed in 2013. The archive received 4.3 GB of digital materials and 43.75 linear feet of paper materials in July 2013*" (Columbia University Libraries 2017).

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