

Media Release

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Borealis and the Johannes Kepler University create the “MORE” scholarship for asylum seekers and beneficiaries

The success of integration is largely dependent upon education and training, and therefore within the refugee initiative of the same name, Borealis and the Johannes Kepler University (JKU) in Linz, Austria have instituted the joint “MORE” project, which is intended to enable asylum applicants and beneficiaries to commence university studies.

During 2017/18, 23 migrants are being aided financially at the beginning of their courses via Borealis MORE launch scholarships. This is an important step, as students receiving basic social services are largely excluded from financial grants. Moreover, asylum beneficiaries basically have the possibility of receiving a stipendium, but it is frequently the case that initially the appropriate criteria are not fulfilled.

Dorothea Wiplinger, Borealis Sustainability Manager: *“This is where our scholarship comes into play by assisting committed asylum seekers to make a start. It closes gaps, where governmental support is insufficient because education is one of the key factors in aiding the efforts of our new fellow-citizens to become part of our society and offer them a future.”* The finance for this support will emanate from the Borealis Social Fund.

Computer science is in special demand

At the initiative of the universities conference, uniko, since the 2015/16 winter semester, within the framework of the MORE program asylum seekers have been undergoing preparatory training at the JKU for a university course. To date, 110 participants have completed the program.

According to the head of the JKU program, Prof. Johann Bacher: *“Thanks to Borealis’ assistance, the first students can now begin or continue their studies.”* Of the 35 applicants, a five-person selection committee chose 23 students. They originate from eight different nations and are divided up among twelve degree courses.

JKU Rector Meinhard Lukas: *“Participation in the program constitutes a clear commitment to our social responsibility as an educational institution. Our university is open to all those seeking to expand their knowledge, irrespective of their origins, and the partnership with Borealis guarantees the long-term prolongation of the MORE project with regard to both its quality and scope.”*

Details concerning the scholarship

Scholarship allocations are dependent upon the fulfillment of various preconditions (admission to a JKU study course, a refugee background, approval by the selection committee, no access to a student grant) and the achievement of certain performance standards (conclusion of a learning agreement). The entry

scholarship is dependent upon the residency and student status, paid on a monthly basis and adds up to between EUR 1,200 and 3,600 per academic year.

Statements from scholarship holders (anonymized)

A computer science student, who had earlier completed a bachelor’s degree in Afghanistan and has been part of the MORE program since the winter semester of 2016, explains his motivation for a course in computer science at the JKU as follows: *“I already had the firm desire to be a computer scientist when I was at school. The possibility of simplifying complicated procedures by writing a script immediately fascinated me.”*

The young man had been able to gather professional experience as a network administrator prior to his flight to Austria and hopes that through his computer science studies he will, *“Obtain a more profound and comprehensive knowledge of IT areas, in order to be able to work responsibly within a company as a network administrator.”*

Another scholarship holder states: *“Mechanics, electrical engineering and computing constitute a combination that represents my world and after one semester of mechatronics studies, I am entirely convinced that this course is the best choice for me. To date, I have attempted to finance my studies myself, but this proved very difficult.”* The student, who comes from Syria, is convinced that, *“As a refugee, I should give something back to Austria and after my studies, I am entirely committed to putting my knowledge at the disposal of an Austrian company.”*

One female scholarship holder has been undertaking a master’s degree in biological chemistry at the JKU since the 2017 summer semester. *“I am delighted that the scholarship has given me the opportunity to continue my studies. After graduation I wish to offer my knowledge to society and am most grateful to the JKU and Borealis for this opportunity.”*

Degree course allocations

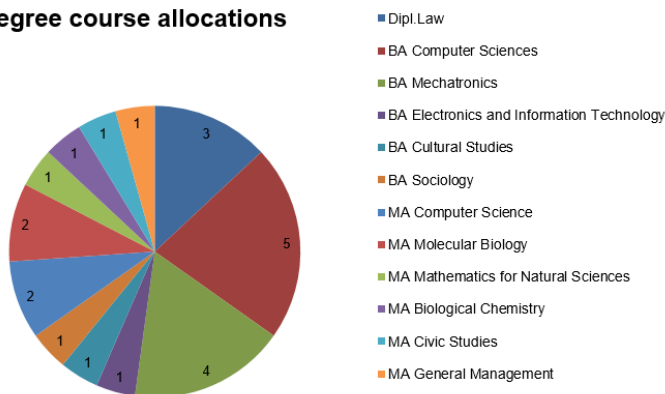


Image: Degree course allocations at Johannes Kepler University in Linz, Austria

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About Borealis

Borealis is a leading provider of innovative solutions in the fields of polyolefins, base chemicals and fertilizers. With its head office in Vienna, Austria, the company currently has around 6,600 employees and operates in over 120 countries. In 2016, Borealis generated EUR 7.2 billion in sales revenue and a net profit of EUR 1,107 million. Mubadala, through its holding company, owns 64% of the company, with the remaining 36% belonging to the Austria-based OMV, an integrated, international oil and gas company. Borealis provides services and products to customers around the world in collaboration with Borouge, a joint venture with the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC). www.borealisgroup.com