

Narasi IISMA Awardees

By: LEILA EMIRA ROYANI

Hello, all future awardees! My name is Leila, and I am an IISMA Awardee 2022. I am a final-year student of English Literature at Universitas Gadjah Mada, and I am currently working on my thesis. Last year, I was given the opportunity to study at The University of Queensland, Australia through the IISMA program.

I came from an underprivileged family and getting a high-quality education has always been a challenge for me and my sibling. However, there is always a way as long as there is a will. There are many funding schemes for students if we look actively and are willing to apply. For me, I finished high school with financial aid from the school and went to university with Bidikmisi scholarship from the government. I also went for a study abroad program last year with a scholarship from the IISMA program.

When I was a kid, I was inspired by a relative who went abroad to study, and I have always been wanting to study overseas since then. However, it has also come to my attention that I do not have enough resources to carry out that dream unless I could find a suitable channel which can help me realize it. So when the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology launched IISMA as a part of the MBKM program, I was all in and highly appreciative. IISMA gives equal opportunity to every eligible student in Indonesia to apply and experience life as a student in different countries. All students, including the recipients of KIPK and Bidikmisi scholarship are more than welcomed to participate in this program.

I was beyond happy and exceptionally grateful that I could have the opportunity to take a big step in improving my life. I understand that future awardees, especially the ones who share the same situation as me, will have doubts now and then about enrolling in the IISMA program. But the IISMA scholarship scheme is fully funded, so students who come from underprivileged backgrounds do not have to worry about anything. All we need is the courage to bet on it and a strong determination to get a better life.

I got lots of valuable experiences during and after the IISMA program. By being an IISMA Awardee, I first-handedly experienced being a member of the international community. I was exposed to various cultures and values - and thus, was always required to be adaptive and resilient. I also got to experience the high standard education in one of the best universities in the world. My fellow IISMA Awardees were also highly supportive and always motivated me to be better in every aspect. To sum up, being an IISMA awardee brings us various opportunities and without a doubt is a life-changing experience.

Especially for students with underprivileged backgrounds or those with KIPK and Bidikmisi Scholarship, IISMA is a good opportunity to change for the better. All the experience I have gone through during IISMA has made a huge contribution in helping me to have a better quality as an individual. I became more confident and I gained so much trust from other people as a result. I also got the chance to broaden my network and have valuable connections which without a doubt will be very useful for my future. But most importantly, I can finally achieve my dream, which now is not a dream but something I actually experienced, not only something I heard in words like it used to be.

*Above narrative is written for the script of IISMA awardees' testimonial video which was uploaded on official Instagram accounts of @kampusmerdeka.ri and @iisma_ri.

(https://www.instagram.com/reel/CpkqhVmA0Ca/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)