



## **THE “EL-YURT UMIDI” FOUNDATION AND ITS ROLE IN TRAINING A NEW GENERATION OF SPECIALISTS**

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### **Abstract**

This article provides detailed information about the activities of the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation of Uzbekistan, its role in providing young people with opportunities to study at foreign higher educational institutions, and the Foundation's contribution to the country's economic and social development. The text describes the conditions created for talented young people to study at leading universities in the world through scholarship programs and competitions organized by the Foundation since 2018. Through this, the goal is to provide young people with modern knowledge, train competitive personnel, and contribute to the economic development of Uzbekistan. In particular, it shows how to use the experience of young specialists who have studied abroad for economic and scientific growth in the country.

**Keywords:** “El-yurt umidi” Foundation, Scholarship programs, foreign education, talented youth, master's degree, doctoral studies, foreign universities, economic development of Uzbekistan, Higher education, social development, international cooperation, reforms in the field of education, personnel training.

### **Introduction**

In this situation of increasing globalization and competition in the world, it is necessary to bring up young people with independent thinking and their own dreams in order not to lag behind progress. Enriching their thinking with modern knowledge and experience is an important task before us.

Since 2018, great opportunities have opened for talented young people to receive education in prestigious higher educational institutions in developed countries. In accordance with the decree of our President Sh.M. Mirziyoyev dated September



25, 2018, the “El-yurt umidi” fund was established [1]. The fund is intended to fulfill the dreams of talented and promising young people, as well as serve as a strong institutional resource providing various sectors of our economy with young specialists who have studied, interned and improved their skills in prestigious universities, scientific centers and various companies of advanced foreign countries.

## **MAIN PART**

The Foundation is tasked with training talented young people from Uzbekistan in master's and doctoral programs, organizing advanced training and internships for specialists in various fields, establishing constant dialogue with compatriots abroad, involving them in the socio-economic reforms taking place in our country, and assisting in the training of highly qualified personnel in cooperation with foreign universities and research centers. In accordance with the resolution of the Head of our state “On measures to create a modern system for the competitive selection of promising management personnel” dated May 30, 2018, a competition was held to meet the need for managerial personnel in ministries, departments and organizations [2]. After the initial stage of the competition, 3,825 out of 8,334 students were recommended for the next stages. At the end of the competition, 50 highly qualified personnel were selected.

The “El-yurt umidi” Foundation is the only institution whose activities are aimed at training qualified, young, promising specialists abroad - the future leaders of our state today and tomorrow. The “Umid” Foundation was founded in 1997 and operated until 2004. It was formed by funding its work through scholarship competitions through sponsorship funds. Over the 7 years of its existence, the “Umid” Foundation has organized the study of 828 young people abroad, while over the past 4 years, the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation has trained about 1,500 young people abroad through doctoral, master's, internship, and advanced training programs, and today a new bachelor's program is also being implemented [3].

In 2018-2022, about 1,500 talented and promising young people received the high status of scholarship holders of the "El-yurt umidi" Foundation. About 1,500 of them improved their knowledge, skills and qualifications under the Foundation's four educational programs at about 300 higher education institutions (HEIs), research centers and prestigious companies in about 40 developed countries,



including the USA, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Japan and South Korea.

The 50th goal of the development strategy, which sets the task of doubling the number of free-thinking and creative young people sent to prestigious foreign universities through the "El-yurt Umidi" Foundation, and training 50% of young people in technical, exact sciences and IT fields, is also an important step towards training competitive, capable personnel in the global labor market [4].

If we look at foreign experience, Singapore, which has become a first-world country from a third world country, has achieved great success in a short period of time and has become an example of a prosperous and just society. Lee Kuan Yew, who created the "Singapore miracle", implemented a number of reforms aimed at training personnel and constantly developing their potential. In particular, a system was introduced to select honest, intelligent and motivated young employees, the most talented school graduates, and send them to study at the most prestigious universities in Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, France, Italy, Japan and the USA. And talented young people who returned from studying at prestigious universities were appointed to leadership positions within 3-4 years. On October 24, 2018, at a meeting dedicated to the further development of the higher education sector, improving the quality of personnel training, and expanding the integration of science and production, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev set the task of further simplifying the procedure for recognizing and nostrifying diplomas of foreign higher educational institutions (HEIs) in order to create conditions for young people studying abroad to return to our homeland.

This fund created conditions for talented young people to continue their studies in master's and doctoral programs in developed foreign countries on the basis of a state grant. In 2019, in the competition held by the "El-yurt umidi" foundation to send young people and young teachers of our republic to study and improve their skills abroad, most of the participants who participated in the economic field indicated that they would go to universities in the country of their choice and continue their studies in their chosen fields. In this regard, cooperation agreements were concluded mainly with universities in countries such as the USA, Great Britain, Russia, Belarus, and Canada.

Indeed, the development of education leads to the development of socio-economic sectors and our society as a whole. Economists have proven that the qualitative and



quantitative increase in gross domestic product depends on the level of education of the population. This is assessed by the number of specialists with higher education and candidates of science per thousand people. For example, the share of specialists in areas that determine the economic outlook per 1,000 people has now become one of the important indicators of the country's well-being. The experience of the USA, Singapore, Japan, and South Korea is an example of this. So, how can this scheme be combined with education and social development? According to experts, it is connected by the following chain: education - science, technology - production, service - economic prosperity [5].

As is known, the development of science, technology and engineering has become very diverse. The simultaneous development of all its directions requires a lot of money. Therefore, countries, based on their capabilities, attach importance to the development of certain sectors of the science and technology sector. In general, since our country has chosen a pragmatic path in the interests of the people, it is very necessary to know what results the money spent in this regard will give, to make strategic forecasts. This, in turn, will also positively solve the issue of training personnel to develop business incubators, technoparks, industrial parks, which play an important role in the innovative development of our economy. Proposal: A special expert group should be formed to identify priority areas for Uzbekistan, and if research institutes, universities, foreign specialists, and specialists in innovative fields are involved in it, it may give good results. For example, it is advisable to choose India for information technologies, Russia for nuclear energy and space, and Germany and France for technology. It is precisely on the basis of these approaches that the establishment of quotas for sending young people abroad for doctoral studies and advanced training serves, first of all, the interests of this people, this nation, plays a major role in the rapid development of education, science, innovations and the economy in society, and the regular influx of foreign investments.

A new generation is being formed in our country that perceives the world in a new way, fights for the pride and rights of the nation, and works together with its people and the fate of its homeland. In order to ensure the success of the fundamental changes and reforms taking place in the life of the state and society, it is extremely important, first of all, to prepare young and enterprising personnel with solid knowledge, who understand and analyze today's foreign and domestic policies in a



market economy. After all, talented young men and women, including “El-yurt umidi” scholarships, have a special place in building a New Uzbekistan. They demonstrate their patriotism, knowledge and skills, enthusiasm, and initiative to build the foundation of the Third Renaissance. Such highly educated and creatively thinking young people are becoming a real force that can make the eternal dreams of our people come true.

In this era of changes and rapid development, finding enterprising, talented, and potential young personnel and training them in prestigious universities and leading research centers in developed foreign countries is one of the factors that further accelerate the socio-economic development of our country. Based on these tasks, the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation has determined the main areas of its activity.

First, to ensure the training, internship, and advanced training of competitive and highly qualified specialists in prestigious universities, research centers, and companies in developed countries for the rapid development of Uzbekistan.

Secondly, in cooperation with prestigious universities and research centers of advanced foreign countries, on the basis of advanced international standards, to provide organizational and financial support for projects to train modern-thinking and competitive specialists in Uzbekistan.

Thirdly, to establish constant dialogue with compatriots, experts, researchers and experienced specialists in various fields living and working abroad, to help involve them in the comprehensive reforms taking place in Uzbekistan.

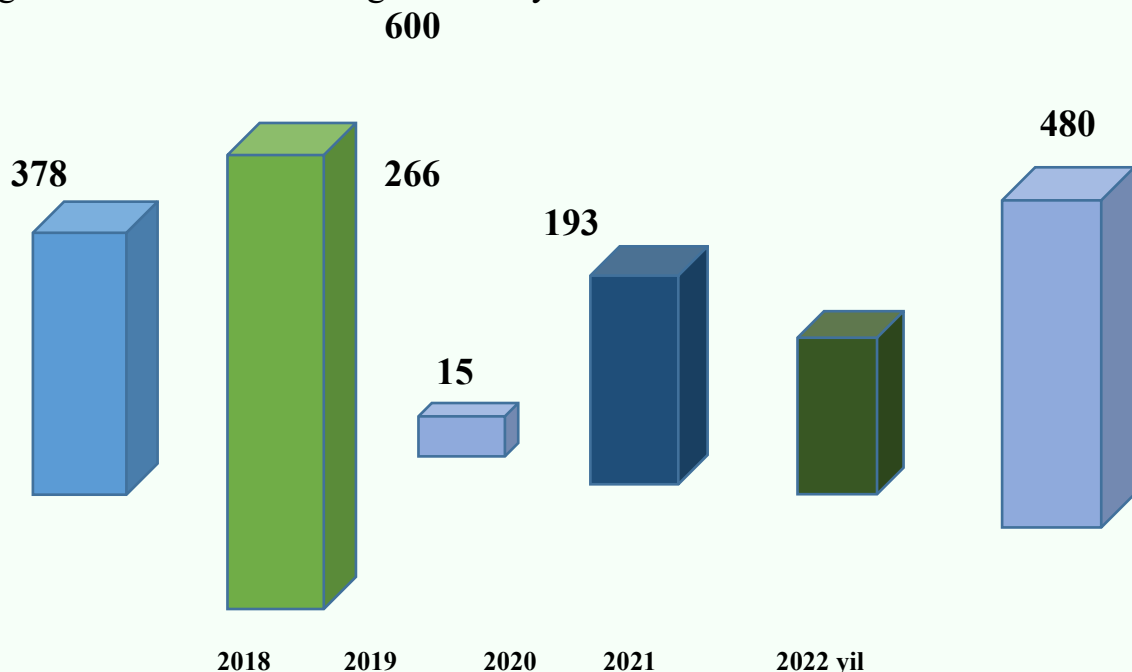
If these tasks are successfully completed, it will contribute to further increasing the power of our Uzbekistan and replenishing its human resources with educated, talented young people.

In the Address of our President to the Oliy Majlis dated December 29, 2020, the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation was tasked with allocating five times more places for training in master's and doctoral programs than in previous years, starting in 2021, in order to train specialists abroad [6].

In accordance with the Decree of our President dated February 11, 2021 “On measures to radically improve the system of training civil servants and specialists abroad and further improving their potential”, the main educational programs of the Fund have changed to a certain extent, that is, important tasks have been set to further improve the activities of the “El-yurt umidi” Fund. In particular, for the first time, a bachelor's degree has been added to the Fund's educational programs, and programs for obtaining a bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees abroad on the

basis of open scholarship competitions are the main educational areas of the Fund. At the same time, the opportunity to study at prestigious universities in developed countries of the world has been created for boys and girls currently graduating from schools, academic lyceums and colleges or Presidential educational institutions [7]. The selection of candidates for educational programs is carried out regularly and is open to all citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan, regardless of their place of work and study in our country. Traditionally, specialists from ministries and departments, professors, researchers, and mainly young people actively participate in open scholarship competitions announced by the fund. In particular, in 2018, 378 young people, in 2019 - 600, in 2020 - 15 (during the pandemic) were able to study abroad, while by 2021 - 266, and in 2022 - 480 (as of September 20, 2022, 193 students were selected) students. To date, a total of 1,452 talented and promising young people and industry specialists have been provided with opportunities to study and do internships at educational institutions and advanced companies in developed countries abroad through the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation.

In 2021, 350 students were allocated scholarships to study at prestigious foreign universities through the El-yurt Umidi Foundation. This is 5 times more than in previous years. Therefore, as noted at the videoconference meeting on measures to improve the foreign language teaching system on May 6, 2021, chaired by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in order to increase the scientific and pedagogical potential of foreign language teaching, 20 places will be allocated per year for foreign doctoral studies through the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation.



As of September 20, 2022. (Figure 1). Indicator of scholarship recipients of the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation who studied abroad in 2018-2022.



The importance of further strengthening cooperation with foreign organizations such as the British Council, Goethe Institute, Alliance Française, KOICA, JICA, Confucius Institute, and expanding non-governmental educational centers was noted.

In 2021, 3 scholarship competitions of the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation were organized. According to its results, 371 most worthy leaders and scholarship holders were selected. This process was attended by heads of a number of ministries and departments in our country, experts of the Republican Center for Spirituality and Enlightenment, foreign specialists, heads of branches of foreign universities in our country, and professors and teachers.

There are also economic and organizational aspects of studying abroad, the solution of which requires extensive efforts and significant funds. In 2021 alone, in the history of the Foundation, 142.5 billion soums were allocated for the organization of education abroad alone. In 2022, this figure was increased to 170 billion soums. In the last two years, about 400 specialists have been sent to the most developed countries of the world - the USA, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Japan, France, Canada. In the USA alone, about 100 “El-yurt umidi” Foundation students were trained in 2021. About 70 Uzbek young people in Britain and 30 in Italy were helped to enrich their knowledge and experience. The sequence of the process is connected with the opportunities that are being created in our country today.

In 2022-2026, the number of students and specialists sent abroad to study under the Foundation’s educational programs is planned to increase annually. For example, from 350 in 2021, it will reach 700 in 2026. In this process, based on the experience gained in 2021 in training 50 percent of young people in technical, exact sciences and IT fields and holding fund competitions, it is planned to hold scholarship competitions starting in 2022 at a time consistent with the education system, admission and training process of leading foreign countries.

In 2022, the II International Forum was held with the participation of the scholarships of this fund. Its main goal is to organize a teleconference with fellows of the “El-yurt umidi” foundation studying abroad, fellow scientists and experts abroad, and to establish real monitoring of the effectiveness of the work of the foundation’s graduates and their professional development. The “El-yurt umidi” foundation has been conducting regular online dialogues with young people studying abroad. It can be said that these meetings were organized to increase the



sense of patriotism among scholarship holders, help them study and solve their problems, as well as learn about their future plans and attract them to the civil service. The dialogue is attended by the leadership of the State Services Development Agency and the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation, representatives of diplomatic missions of the Republic of Uzbekistan abroad. Bilateral memorandums and other agreements on cooperation with more than 20 prestigious foreign universities and organizations in 2021-2022 have been reached. Based on these agreements, a discount of 20 to 40 percent is taken from the tuition fees of scholarship holders, saving money spent from the state budget.

One of the main tasks of the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation is to establish dialogue with talented scientists and expert compatriots living abroad, possessing deep knowledge and professional experience, in order to widely promote the cultural, scientific and spiritual heritage of Uzbekistan and develop mutually beneficial, friendly relations with foreign countries. For this purpose, a council of compatriot experts was established under the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation. 25 compatriot professors working in the USA, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, South Korea, Australia, Japan and other countries were involved in this council. During the cooperation, views were exchanged on the implementation of various projects and the application of proposals in various fields. These included information on the introduction of the credit-module system in higher education institutions of Uzbekistan, its advantages, the main rules of the system, the specific features of the US and European models and their differences, and the regulatory and legal framework. Currently, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an electronic register of compatriots working in foreign countries has been created. It contains information about more than 5,000 of our compatriots. Work is underway to enrich the database with information about prominent scientists and specialists with extensive scientific and practical experience working in large international companies.

In order to support talented youth, the foundation's scholarship holders are currently studying at the most prestigious universities in the world, including Oxford University (Great Britain, 2nd in the QS global ranking), Cambridge University (Great Britain, QS-3), University College London (Great Britain, QS-5), Imperial College London (Great Britain, QS-7), University of Chicago (USA, QS-10), University of Edinburgh (Great Britain, QS-16), Columbia University



(USA, QS-20) and other higher education institutions (HEIs) and research centers. As of November 2022, 417 scholarship holders of the “El-yurt umidi” foundation are continuing their studies in bachelor's, master's, residency and doctoral programs in countries such as the USA, Great Britain, Germany, France, Japan, Canada, Italy, Spain, South Korea, China, and Russia. Young people who have returned from these educational institutions with high knowledge and extensive experience serve to enrich the potential human resource base in our country.

On August 12-13, 2022, at the II International Forum of scholarship holders of the “Umid” and “El-yurt umidi” Foundations on the topic “We will build a new Uzbekistan together with young people who think differently and have modern knowledge and experience,” special emphasis was placed on establishing monitoring of the efficiency of labor activity and professional development of the foundation’s graduates, widely promoting the state’s care for talented young people to study abroad, and further encouraging young people to actively participate in scholarship competitions.

Currently, the foundation is serving as a bridge in providing ministries and departments in our country with personnel who have gained high knowledge and experience abroad. At the initiative of the Head of our state, each graduate of the fund was assigned to the first head of the relevant ministry and department. Necessary measures are being taken to effectively use the knowledge and experience gained abroad, create appropriate conditions for the scholarship holders to implement their scientific and practical ideas in practice, and ensure their constant growth in career paths.

Over the four years of its operation, with the support of the fund, more than 200 of our compatriots with rich scientific and practical experience have been involved in ministries, departments, and local government organizations. At the same time, more than 120 meetings and webinars were organized with the participation of prestigious universities, scientific centers, and compatriot scientists and experts living abroad, which covered more than 20 thousand professors, teachers, specialists, and students.

In addition, in accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On additional measures to comprehensively support young people and further increase their social activity” dated July 13, 2021, a procedure for paying additional bonuses to the official salary of young specialists who graduated from



foreign higher educational institutions included in the top 500 lists of prestigious international rating organizations and working in state bodies, organizations and institutions has been introduced [8]. The amount of additional bonuses is set at 15 to 75 times the minimum wage, depending on the level of education. Currently, additional bonuses are being paid to the official salary of 60 young specialists who have studied abroad through the conclusion of a special contract.

## CONCLUSION

The “El-yurt umidi” Foundation continues to improve its activities aimed at finding and selecting talented young specialists, creating new opportunities for our youth to study at the most prestigious universities and scientific institutions abroad, innovative organizations, and other companies.

In order to improve the activities aimed at finding and selecting talented young specialists in our country, organizing their education at prestigious universities and scientific institutions, innovative and other companies abroad, the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation will continue to create new opportunities for our youth. The main goal is to organize short-term scientific internships of talented young scientists in leading foreign scientific centers, support their studies and professional development, ensure their participation in international scientific and technical conferences and scientific projects, and ensure the publication of scientific works, at the expense of the Fund for Support of Innovative Development and Innovative Ideas and the “El-yurt umidi” Foundation.

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