

QES ADVANCED SCHOLARS –WEST AFRICA: *NETLINKS* FOR ENHANCED HEALTH EQUITY AND SUSTAINABLE INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN RURAL WEST AFRICA- COHORT III

TRAVEL INFORMATION

29th JANUARY – 8th MARCH 2024

University of Ghana Nutrition Research and Training Centre (UG-NRTC), Asesewa,
Eastern Region, Ghana

Congratulations QEScholar!

We look forward to welcoming you to the QES Advanced Scholars –West Africa: *Netlinks* for Enhanced Health Equity and Sustainable Inclusive Growth in Rural West Africa Capacity Development Programme. We hope this information will help make your preparation and travel as enjoyable as possible. This information is also available on the [UG-NRTC website](#).

Kindly take note of the following:

Travel information

Click on the [Travel information required](#) and complete it to aid with travel and planning purposes. For scholars arriving from outside of Ghana, provide all necessary information as accurately as possible.

Arrival

Air travel-international/Local travel

All Scholars are to check into the **Institute of African Studies, Yiri Lodge**, the University of Ghana Resort between Saturday, and Sunday, the **27th and 28th of January 2024**. All Scholars, including those based in Ghana, are booked to stay at **Yiri Lodge** on a full-board basis. Scholars from outside the country will check into **Yiri Lodge** as per the flight itinerary (**27th or 28th January 2024**). Ghanaian Scholars will check into Yiri Lodge on **Sunday, January 28, 2024**. Check-in starts at 2 PM. Check-out of Yiri Lodge is on the morning of **Wednesday, January 31, 2024**. Scholars will afterwards depart to the University of Ghana Nutrition Research and Training Centre (NRTC) Asesewa in the Eastern Region. Depending on the traffic, Yiri Lodge is about a 10- to 15-minute drive from the Kotoka International Airport. For those arriving at Kotoka International Airport, you will be met by a driver for pick-up. **Further details are given below under the transportation from the airport section.** Kindly find Google Maps directions to Yiri Lodge- [Directions to Yiri Lodge from the Kotoka International Airport](#)

Lodging/accommodation in Accra

All Scholars will be lodging at the **Institute of African Studies, Yiri Lodge, Chalets, South Legon Drive, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra. Contact: Mr. Kyei -(+233) 024 637 1944**

Lodging/accommodation in Asesewa

All Scholars will be lodging at the University of Ghana NRTC. The NRTC provides bedding (blanket, pillowcases, bedsheets); bring a comforter/ cover cloth and towels.

You will be assigned double rooms, separate for men and women, men's and women's separate shared bath facilities, a shared kitchen facility and clotheslines available for hanging washed clothes.

QES Training Programme Key Activity dates

The capacity-building programme begins on **Monday, January 29, 2024**, and ends on **Thursday, March 7, 2024**. **Scholars will depart for their home countries on Friday, March 8, 2024**. On **Monday, January 29, 2024, at 09:00 a.m.**, an orientation programme will be held at the **training room of the University of Ghana Business School (UGBS) Innovation Hub** on the University of Ghana's main campus. A detailed schedule will be shared with you on the orientation day. On **Wednesday, January 31, 2024**, Scholars will depart for the NRTC at 8:00 a.m. Breakfast will be served from 7:00 a.m.- 8:00 a.m. at Yiri Lodge. A bus will convey Scholars from Accra to the NRTC, Asesewa. The programme will formally close on **Thursday, March 7, 2024, with a closing ceremony on the University of Ghana's main campus in Accra**. All Scholars will be conveyed to Accra by bus. Only scholars from outside Ghana will check in to Yiri Lodge on the same day and depart for their destinations on **Friday, March 8, 2024**. Airport departure arrangements will be communicated accordingly. All training sessions will be held at the **NRTC Conference room at Asesewa**.

QES Training Programme objectives

The objectives of the training programme are:

- Increase the number of Canadian and West African Scholars undertaking specialized training in leadership, professional, and research skills;
- Increase meaningful engagement among current and previous Canadian and West African Scholars;
- Increase Scholars' opportunities for engagement and research with non-academic partners, industry and community organizations;
- Strengthen the capacity of West African academic partners and non-academic organizations to address their priorities.

Research Placement Partner (RPP)

You will be provided with a list of topics that have been developed by the RPPs; you will be asked to rank the topics based on your interests. You might work with another scholar on the same or different topics with the RPP. You are to work with the RPP to produce a high-quality output (e.g., report, brief, article) at the end of the 5-weeks.

QES Training Programme materials

You will receive a schedule, other training materials, and housekeeping information about the NRTC on the morning of **Monday, January 29, 2024**, at the UGBS Innovation Hub during the orientation.

Travel Documentation Requirements

No visa is required for countries within the West African sub-region: **In case you need a visa, inform the administration as soon as possible.**

- **All non-Ghanaian Scholars need a valid passport for at least 6 months**, with enough pages for immigration stamps to enable them to enter Ghana. Kindly note that the ECOWAS card cannot be used for travel by air, according to the University of Ghana International Programs Office.

Health

Proof of a valid Yellow Fever and COVID-19 vaccinations are required for entry into Ghana. Thus, we encourage our Scholars to carry their valid Yellow Fever and COVID-19 vaccination certificates along with their passports. If you are on any medication, please remember to bring enough dosage of your medication.

Medical insurance and emergency healthcare services

National Health Insurance will be used to cover incidental medical expenses. Non-Ghanaian Scholars will register on January 29, 2024, for it. Ghanaians are encouraged to come along with their NHIA insurance cards for use. We encourage Scholars to inquire about travel medical coverage with their own insurance in addition. In case of any incident during the training programme, kindly let the *Netlinks* administration know (at the essential contact section).

Attire

Smart casual or business clothes are acceptable. You may want to bring exercise clothes for early morning walks and attire suitable for a stakeholders' dinner. Temperatures in January to March range from 25-30 degrees Celsius. Bring light clothing for the day and a warm shawl or pullover for the evenings. The conference room of the UG-NRTC has air conditioning. When in use, the room does get cold, so carry along a shawl/sweater for use in the conference room.

Flights/transportation

You have already received an award letter. For scholars who will be arriving from outside the country, flight tickets will be purchased for you by the programme after completing the [Travel information required](#) form and you have confirmed your suitable travel date and time. **Please keep and submit your boarding passes stub to the project coordinator on Monday, January 29, 2024, in an envelope. If you choose to change your itinerary after you have confirmed it and it has been booked, you will be responsible for the additional cost.**

Travel advice

Always plan to be at the airport at least two hours before a domestic flight and three hours before an international flight to:

- allow for any traffic jams toward the airport
- ensure that you are not bumped off the flight in case of overbooking
- check-in and go through the immigration
- get to your boarding gate on time

You can check in online 24 hours before your flight (check with your specific airline), which will allow you to select your preferred seat and fill out your frequent flyer details (optional). This information is available on the airline's website.

Allowable luggage weight is indicated on your ticket – which is about 23 kg and 7 kg for hand luggage. **The programme does not cover excess luggage so ensure the airline luggage limit is not exceeded.** Airlines are particular about the substances/objects you can take on board, especially in your hand luggage. **Don't carry luggage for strangers, and never leave your luggage unattended. Make sure your luggage is clearly tagged with your name and contacts.**

If you are transiting through airports, be sure to check your luggage and yourself through to your destination. Always carry some cash with you for any eventualities or delays.

Transport from Kotoka International Airport (KIA) to Hotel (Yiri Lodge)

Upon arrival at the airport, you will be met by a representative of the QES Team/UG-NRTC. If a driver is not there for any reason, please call Afua on (+233 209547447). The drive from KIA airport to Yiri Lodge is approximately 10 to 15 minutes depending on the traffic.

Meals

Your meals will be paid for from the day of arrival to the day of departure, including non-training days. You will be provided with breakfast and lunch throughout your stay in Asesewa. During the training, lunch will be served as a group at the NRTC kitchen, but dinner time is free so that you may prepare a meal of your own. You will be given a daily per diem of GHC 70.00 for each day of the training programme to enable you to prepare/purchase your meals and cover incidentals. Depending on the training schedule, lunch will be served from 1.00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. On the day of your arrival at Yiri Lodge, indicate to the front desk if you would like a meal prepared for you. Meals provided upon arrival are based on requests from guests.

Please let *Netlinks* administration know if you have special dietary considerations.

Water

Tap water may not be safe for drinking, but you can use it for cooking. Bottled drinking water will be provided during the orientation. Water bottles are provided for re-filling at the UG-NRTC from water dispensers. The water in the dispensers is for **DRINKING PURPOSES ONLY**. Tap water at UG-NRTC is safe for cooking.

Covered expenses

All accommodation, training-related transportation, health insurance (NHIS), and all meals will be catered for during the program.

Expenses that are **NOT** covered

The programme does not pay any expenses for beverages outside the mealtimes (alcoholic drinks), personal telephone calls, or personal needs. **The programme does not cover excess luggage, so ensure the airline luggage limit is not exceeded. Make sure to specify the closest airport to you in your country of origin in the travel request link shared because the programme does not cover in-country hotel expenses.** If in doubt, please check with *Netlinks* administration before incurring an expense.

Reimbursements

Reimbursements will not be made without receipts.

Receipts are required for any transport expenses within your country to the airport, e.g., fuel or taxi to the airport. (*Note: Although you will only have a one-way taxi receipt, the expense will be multiplied by two, if the return journey costs the same. Fuel is paid against a receipt, and you are advised to fill the gas tank to take care of the return journey as this is paid only once. You cannot claim taxi fare and fuel for the same journey. If you wish to claim mileage, it will be calculated per kilometre.*)

Please itemize all your expenses on a piece of paper and attach them to your receipts. Ensure that your receipts include your name (written on the back). Please, put them in an envelope and give them to the *Netlinks* administration on **Monday, January 29**, 2024, of the orientation programme.

Reimbursement process

Reimbursements will be made during the programme period in Ghana cedis.

Group photograph

A group photo will be taken, and digital copies will be shared with each Scholar.

Time

Ghana is on Greenwich Meridian Time (GMT). Synchronize your watch so that you are on time for each activity.

Weather

Check <http://www.bbc.com/weather/184745> for updates. Temperatures range between 25-30 degrees Celsius.

Power

The electricity is 240 volts, 50 Hz. Appliances manufactured for 110 volts may be used with a transformer, but this is not advisable. Please be sure and bring the British three-pin Type G-type plug adaptors for your computer and other personal appliances, if required.

Social media

A session on how to share on the social media handles (Facebook, X, Twitter, LinkedIn) will be provided. A QES staff will be based on site for the first two weeks to walk you through sharing on social media. The QEScholars on duty will work with the QES team to share snippets of daily sessions with pictures after this.

Evaluation

At the end of every week, a link to a Google form will be shared with you for evaluation. You are encouraged to complete it immediately after you receive the link. This will help provide us with timely feedback to improve the programme.

Closing ceremony

A closing ceremony will be organised at the end of the programme. It will be attended by QES partners and RPPs, university faculty, and QES alumni. You will share your experience in a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation. A template will be shared with you to prepare for this presentation. You and the scholar who worked with an RPP will share your experience in 10 minutes followed by questions and answers.

Security

As in any city globally, visitors to Ghana should be careful with their handbags and other personal belongings. Common rules to guard you against being a victim include:

- Even in your hotel room, keep your valuables safe and away from any attraction.
- Do not walk at night, even for a short distance.
- Do not walk alone.
- Be wary of people hanging around outside hotels. It is a favourite place to catch tourists and mug them.
- Keep to the main streets, avoiding shortcuts.
- Avoid carrying large sums of money and do not wear expensive jewellery.
- Do not accept food from strangers. Visitors have been known to be drugged and then robbed.

- Keep doors and windows locked and valuables out of sight when in a vehicle. Snatching items from vehicles can occur.
- Laptops and expensive mobile phones are attractive to thieves.
- Check with hotel security if you plan to go out of the hotel.

| Essential QES Contacts | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Prof. Richmond Aryeetey | Principal Investigator Coordinator | (+233) 26 112 8506 | raryeetey@ug.edu.gh |
| Dr. Agarthah Ohemeng | Co-Principal Investigator, Coordinator, NRTC | (+233) 24 486 2606 | anohemeng@ug.edu.gh |
| Priscilla Boadi | Coordinator – QES-AS-WA | | qes_linkin-ghana_admin.shn@mcgill.ca |
| Afua Tetteh | Coordinator – QES-AS-WA | (+233) 209547447 | qesghana2@gmail.com |
| Naa Gyan-Mante | Dietitian, UG- NRTC | (+233) 24 813 0629 | gymanany@gmail.com |
| Bieko Kumordzie | Driver | (+233) 24 169 5921 | |
| Jean Tresor | QES Intern | (+233) 501324950 | haritresor@gmail.com |

PS: Keep a digital copy of this Travel Information Guide so that it is always handy for easy reference.