



# Melete Scholarships Scheme

## Supporting the next generation of entrepreneurial innovators

The Melete Scholarships Scheme will award a number of scholarships each year to PhD students studying at the Knowledge Media Institute (KMi) within The Open University (OU).

Individuals can apply in writing for an unrestricted cash gift of £5,000, which has the aim of turning bright ideas into reality, stimulating innovation for social purposes.

Sir John and Lady Chisholm, both of whom have had long and varied careers in the innovation arena, have created the Melete Scholarships Scheme as they know from their extensive experience that the best way to support talent is to provide both resources and freedom.

In addition to the scholarship, a dedicated hub will link fellow Melete scholarship recipients, and mentoring opportunities for teaching and learning will be offered with Sir John and Lady Chisholm to gain directly from their wealth of experience.

**Melete's mission is to identify and support talented PhD students as they become the next generation of visionary innovators driven to create significant societal impact.**



### Melete Foundation

We founded Melete in 2019 because our life experience told us that motivated and inspiring people are absolutely the basis of positive change in the world.



Our vision is to seek out such people and help them create the credibility that will enable the realisation of their talents.

We are looking for people with ideas that they can put into practice to create self-sustaining social good, to nurture ideas that have the potential to benefit those who are disadvantaged in any way, and give an

opportunity for exceptional people to have the extra financial freedom that a scholarship provides to create space to realise their talents.

Our aim is to seed innovative approaches which have the potential to take root and blossom into self-sustaining enterprises. We also want to encourage the networking amongst an innovative community dedicated to social good such that each member gains insights from fellow collaborators and together have the potential of being far more than the sum of their parts.

*John and Kitty Chisholm*

## Terms and conditions

- Studying towards a PhD at The Open University
- The study is taking place within the Knowledge Media Institute or co-supervised by KMi staff
- Unrestricted support of up to £5,000 for each student

The OU has helped students to fulfil their potential for more than 50 years and was one of the great educational innovations of the 20th century. At the heart of the OU is the concept of being 'open to all' giving opportunities to everyone no matter their personal circumstances – all they need is the desire to learn.

## The Founders

John Chisholm started his employed life in 1964 as an apprentice in Vauxhall Motors taking day release at what was then Luton Tech. While there he took the Scholarship exam to Queens' College Cambridge where he completed an Engineering Degree and stayed on to do research in the Control Engineering Dept. That is where he started his early work on mathematical modelling of complex systems and that introduced him to what would now be called the tech world. The contrast with the 1960s motor industry could not be more stark. He was amazed to discover that what an individual conceived in their head could be translated, using new technology, into something another individual would find really useful.

The translation of research and technology into practical utility became the theme of John's life. His learning from that is that all members of the human race have a brain that is wired for innovation, and the most satisfactory life experience is to use that to make a positive difference in the world.

Kitty Chisholm started her career in 1969, teaching English as a foreign language. She joined the OU in 1972 as a student and in 1974 as a part-time research assistant. In the early 90s a trip to the MIT Media lab triggered the realisation that the OU had brilliant people, who together, could create the future in technology for teaching and learning. And because of the vision, talents and hard work of Tom Vincent, Marc Eisenstadt and Sir John Daniel, the KMi was born. Following an MSc at Henley, she co-founded Boardwalk Leadership, a boutique consultancy, to support more women into leadership roles and organisations towards developing more inclusive cultures.

Kitty's work at the OU gave her a passionate interest in how individuals and organisations learn and change. It confirmed her belief that every person has the potential to achieve extraordinary feats in some sphere of their life.

## Process

- Students will be asked to complete an application form and write a letter of application (no more than 1,500 words) to apply for the scholarship
- Application letters should include students own aspirations as an individual and how these align with the Melete mission, as well as their project which will be the focus for the funding
- Application letters will be reviewed with Sir John and Lady Chisholm, the Director of the Knowledge Media Institute and Academic Services
- Applicants will be short-listed to attend a panel interview, this will be based solely on the quality of the written submission with no preference applied to a student's background or personal circumstances
- A panel interview will select the successful applicant(s)
- The chosen recipients will be informed by the University
- Contact details will then be passed to the Melete Foundation who will award the gift directly to the student
- Awards will be made at the start of the academic year in which it is awarded
- Ongoing support will be through Sir John and Lady Chisholm, the Melete Scholarships Scheme Hub and the PhD students supervisor



Applications for the 2025/26 academic year will close at midday on 16th May 2025. Applications received after this deadline will not be accepted. Interviews: w/c 9th June 2025. Successful applicants will be notified by 30th June 2025.

## Find out more



Visit  
<https://melete.kmi.open.ac.uk>