



THE HALI ACCESS NETWORK BRIDGE FUND

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From Barriers to Bridges

The HALI Access Network Bridge Fund exists to remove the final financial barriers that prevent talented students from low-income backgrounds from accepting life-changing university offers. In the 2022/23 admission cycle, 239 HALI students were admitted to international universities with gapped financial aid packages.

While 25 students received full scholarships averaging \$80,000 annually, they were unable to enroll due to transition costs, including flights, passports, visa fees, SEVIS and immunizations. Others faced annual contributions of \$1,000–\$3,000, making enrollment impossible without additional support.

By providing support to close these gaps, the fund unlocks millions in scholarship value, empowering students to begin their academic and professional journeys.



Our Impact



- Impact reaching six countries: Burundi, Cameroon, Kenya, Rwanda, Zambia and Zimbabwe
- Students enrolled in top universities such as Cornell, Brown, Duke, Tufts, Vanderbilt, Smith College, Carleton College, Whitman College, University of Pennsylvania, MIT, and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology,

28 No. of Students Supported

\$2M+ in annual scholarships unlocked.

\$1 invested unlocks \$80 in annual scholarships.

The Fund Has Three Key Objectives:

1

Facilitate university enrollment by removing last-mile financial barriers that prevent HALI students with full scholarships from accepting their offers.

2

Unlock new scholarship opportunities through strategic micro-grants that activate partial scholarships at leading African and global institutions.

3

Empower HALI students to lead and give back to the community through their global education.

By 2026, we aim to:



Support 30 students with essential transition funding.



Provide multi-year support to 16 students to cover essential non academic costs at universities offering partial scholarships.



The HALI Access Network is a pan-African network of 41 schools and nonprofits in 16 African countries, removing financial and systemic barriers to global higher education for exceptional students from underserved communities. Together, we have supported more than 12,000 students in accessing higher education and becoming changemakers in their communities.

Stories of Hope and Transformation



Esther — Tufts University, Architectural Studies

"The Bridge Fund gave me peace of mind and dignity. Now I'm in a space where dreams aren't just ideas, they're actionable. I've met mentors, joined design studios, and started thinking critically about how architecture can reflect identity. I want to design buildings that reflect our culture and use sustainable materials. Supporting students like me means investing in a more thoughtful, inclusive world."

Esther's story is one of grace and determination. A small gap in visa and SEVIS fees threatened to delay her dream, but the Bridge Fund cleared the way. Today, she's thriving at Tufts University, designing sustainable architecture that celebrates African identity and advocates for inclusion and cultural expression.

Karen — Bowdoin College, Economics & Math

"I've discovered new passions I never imagined. I'm learning to play the piano. I want to bring these skills home and help families like mine see education as a path for daughters, too. The Bridge Fund didn't just help me transition—it helped me thrive."

Karen's journey began with a dream and a challenge. Her family could not afford the transition costs that came with her full scholarship. The Bridge Fund stepped in, lifting that weight without disrupting her siblings' education and allowing her to start at Bowdoin without debt or delay. Today, she's thriving academically, mentoring younger students, and inspiring girls in her community to believe in their potential. She is exploring unexpected academic interests like Arctic archaeology and volunteers as a French translator at a local food pantry, turning lived experiences into impact.



Eliphase — Northwestern University, Electrical Engineering



"My family considered selling land, and I'm relieved we avoided that. To me, the Bridge Fund was more than money; it was belief in my potential. I am now in an environment that's pushing me to grow and to expand my worldview. I am motivated because I know there is a community of supporters who believe in me."

For Eliphase, a full scholarship to Northwestern was nearly lost because his family couldn't afford his visa, immunizations and other preparatory expenses. The Bridge Fund prevented a heartbreaking choice and helped him arrive on campus ready to focus on his dreams. He's now leading student initiatives and developing community-based startups to create jobs and opportunities in Burundi. He has also served as an International Peer Advisor, helping new students adjust to campus life, just as he was once helped.

Mercy — Vanderbilt University, Economics & Political Science

"I've connected with professionals, attended policy forums, and started shaping my vision for change." Mercy was on the brink of taking a loan to fund her transition to university. The Bridge Fund lifted that financial pressure, giving her the freedom to focus on her education. She now uses some of her time to volunteer with local advocacy groups and explore policy research to strengthen her impact. She is building her networks through internships and university events, preparing to launch an NGO supporting women and children affected by violence.



The Ripple Effect Across HALI

Across the network, the Bridge Fund not only unlocks student potential but also bridges budget gaps for member organizations. Beyond financial relief, HALI members report that the Bridge Fund:

- **Strengthens their operational impact by increasing student enrollment rates.**
- **Enables a smoother transition and enhances students' focus on valuable pre-departure preparation.**
- **Empowers staff to focus on core programs, mentorship and leadership development.**



Join Us in Bridging the Gap