

Introducing the Nuffic Netherlands Education Support Offices (Nesos)

Background

The Netherlands is committed and ready to compete in a knowledge-based economy and to create a European higher education area as noted in the Bologna Declaration and the Lisbon Strategy.

In 2001, the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science therefore asked Nuffic to develop a programme for the following ten target countries and regions: Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Mexico, Russia, Taipei, Thailand and Vietnam. Its primary objective? To raise the profile and awareness of the Netherlands as a country with a strong knowledge infrastructure and excellent higher education.

The Neso (Netherlands Education Support Offices) programme, as it was named, did just that and it is now well embedded in Dutch higher education's international activities in the target countries.

Nuffic Nesos

As part of the Neso programme, Nuffic operates overseas representative centres, known as Nuffic Neso offices or Nuffic Nesos, to promote Dutch higher education in the designated countries and to position it in the international higher education marketplace in competition with other study destinations.

Target audience

Nuffic Nesos serve a wide range of target groups and partners: Dutch and international higher education institutions, students, alumni and knowledge workers, the Dutch government and other governmental organizations, umbrella organizations and stakeholders.

Location

Full-fledged Nuffic Neso offices are located in Brazil (Brasilia), China (Beijing), Indonesia (Jakarta and Surabaya), Korea (Seoul), Mexico (Mexico City), Russia (Moscow), Thailand (Bangkok) and Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh City). Smaller Nuffic Neso Desks are located in Taipei and India (Ahmadabad and Chennai).

Organization

The Education Promotion Department at Nuffic's head office in The Hague is engaged in the positioning and promotion of Dutch higher education. The department executes the Neso programme on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The Nuffic Nesos come under this department and are managed by its head. A Neso team at the head office helps to execute the Neso programme and offers general support to the Nuffic Nesos with regard to their key activities.

In general, the full-fledged Nuffic Neso offices are managed by a director from the Netherlands and employ local staff in the positions of Education Promotion Officer, Student Counsellor, Finance & Operations Officer and Alumni Officer. Depending on local circumstances, Nuffic Neso offices may employ additional staff to execute activities such as the administration of scholarship programmes, like the StuNed scholarship programme in Indonesia. The smaller Nuffic Neso Desks in Taipei and India employ a local director and/or Education Promotion Officers only.

Key activities of Nuffic Nesos

The main tasks of Nuffic Nesos are the generic promotion of Dutch higher education and the enhancement of cooperation between higher education institutions in the Netherlands and institutions in the Neso countries. The offices also serve as a channel for information and provide support and liaison for the academic communities of the Netherlands and of the country where they are situated. They provide students with information and guidance on choosing an international study programme, training programme or course. The wide range of tasks performed by the Nuffic Nesos are grouped in four key activities:

- Generic promotion and student counselling
- Institutional cooperation
- Market research and analysis
- Holland alumni networks

Services offered by Nuffic Neso offices

The services offered within the framework of the four key activities may differ per Nuffic Neso office, depending on local circumstances, such as the capacity of the office. For this reason, the Nuffic Neso Desks in India, for example, focus only on the key activities of generic promotion and market research and analysis.

To use the wide range of services offered by a Nuffic Neso office, Dutch higher education institutions are required to sign the Code of Conduct on 'International students in Dutch higher education' and comply with the set criteria and requirements. A copy of the Code of Conduct can be obtained from the website www.internationalstudy.nl.

Dutch higher education institutions can also request additional services from the Nuffic Nesos, usually for a cost-covering fee. The local Nuffic Nesos offices can provide more information on this.

The following services, grouped by key activity, are offered to the various target groups free of charge.

Generic promotion and student counselling

Services for Dutch higher education institutions

- Placement of institutional publications and promotional materials for use in Nuffic Neso offices and distribution during events.
- Publication of information about Dutch higher education institutions and study programmes on the Nuffic Neso websites, on www.studyinholland.nl and in the international study programmes and courses (ISPAC) database.
- Promotion of Dutch higher education on social media sites (local and international) in a generic sense.
- Provision of fair overviews as well as facilitation of and participation in education fairs.
- Management of the Orange Tulip Scholarship Programme and institutional scholarships in specific Neso countries.

Services for the Dutch government

- Management of the StuNed scholarship programme in Indonesia.

Services for local students, academic staff and knowledge workers

- Provision of information about the higher education system, higher education institutions and study and research opportunities in the Netherlands.
- Provision of general information about scholarships and visa procedures.
- Provision of general assistance in selecting and applying to international study programmes at Dutch higher education institutions.
- Provision of pre-departure assistance.

Market research and analysis

Services for Dutch higher education institutions

- Publication of general information about the higher education system and the education market in Neso target countries based on market research and analysis.
- Publication of the Neso e-Newsletter and the Nuffic market information website (www.nuffic.nl/marketinformation) that contains Education Market Information Factsheets, student survey reports and other market research reports.

Institutional cooperation

Services for Dutch higher education institutions

- Provision of information about higher education systems and higher education institutions in the Neso target countries.
- Compilation of cooperation between Dutch and local higher education institutions.
- Advice on establishing institutional cooperation in general in the ten Neso target countries.
- General assistance in finding relevant networks and potential partners for institutional cooperation.
- Provision of general information on educational projects and calls for proposals by national and multilateral organizations.

Services for local higher education institutions

- Organization of presentations and seminars on Dutch higher education.
- General assistance in finding potential Dutch partners for institutional cooperation.
- Provision of access to networks in the Netherlands.

Holland alumni networks

Services for Dutch higher education institutions

- Contacts with alumni and assistance in organizing and promoting alumni events in the ten Neso target countries.
- Help in setting up and maintaining Holland alumni networks.
- Publication of information about alumni networks affiliated with Dutch higher education institutions on the Neso Holland Alumni network websites.

Services for local students and alumni

- Organization of events.
- Linking alumni with prospective students before departure.
- Linking alumni with fellow Holland alumni in the local Holland Alumni network and on www.hollandalumni.nl.
- Liaising with Dutch companies.

In the context of executing the Neso programme, the Neso team in the Education Promotion Department in The Hague also offers some services to Dutch higher education institutions:

- Dissemination of information about the Nuffic Nesos and their activities.
- Organization of Neso feedback groups for the exchange of experiences and information sharing.
- Advice on the promotion of Dutch higher education (online and print promotion, etc.) and facilitation of and participation in education fairs in the ten Neso target countries.
- Provision of market information and analysis for the ten Neso target countries on www.nuffic.nl/marketinformation.
- Providing information and organizing alumni trainings.

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Nuffic is the Netherlands organisation for international cooperation in higher education. Our motto is Linking Knowledge Worldwide. This means linking people, because it's knowledge that makes us unique as people. Nuffic works in line with Dutch government policy to serve students and higher education institutions in three key areas:

Programme Management

Administrating international mobility programmes (scholarships) and institutional cooperation programmes.

Information Services

Providing information about higher education systems in the Netherlands and in other countries; providing credential evaluation services; providing information in the Netherlands about studying abroad, and in other countries about studying in Holland; promoting Dutch higher education in other countries; encouraging international mobility.

Expertise

Conducting studies into international cooperation in higher education; providing information to expert groups and consultation forums; transferring our knowledge of international cooperation in higher education through courses and seminars.

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