

## Sciences Po First Continental European University to Join The MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program

**Paris, France, February 23, 2017** – The MasterCard Foundation has announced a six-year, USD\$8.2 million (around €7.6 million) partnership with Sciences Po in Paris, France, to provide 120 bright, next-generation African leaders with a high-quality social sciences university education in one of Europe’s leading universities. Open to both English-speaking and French-speaking candidates, the partnership will increase the options available to students from Francophone Africa to study in their language of choice through the MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program.

“Investing in Africa’s next-generation leaders has been a strategic priority for Sciences Po since the mid-2000s. This is not only consistent with Sciences Po’s mission; it is also aligned with the strategic challenges and opportunities specifically affecting Africa. We are delighted to enter into a partnership with The MasterCard Foundation, which shares similar values and a common purpose,” said Frédéric Mion, President of Sciences Po.

The MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program at Sciences Po will benefit talented African students facing significant entry barriers to higher education and who wish to join the Europe-Africa Undergraduate Program (20 full scholarships), a Master’s degree in one of seven graduate schools (40 full scholarships), or Sciences Po’s vibrant summer school (60 full scholarships) where they will explore contemporary issues in leadership, African affairs and global topics of equal importance.

“We are excited to welcome Sciences Po to The MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program,” says Peter Materu, Director, Education and Learning and Youth Livelihoods, The MasterCard Foundation. “With nearly a majority of Sciences Po’s faculty employed as professionals as well as professors, Scholars will receive the very best of both theory and real-life applications to catalyze and contribute to positive social change in their communities.”

Sciences Po has committed to more than doubling the number of African high schools that its recruiters reach – from 30 in 2015 to over 70 by 2017 – and will focus on countries currently underrepresented in the Scholars Program, namely Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal and Madagascar, among others.

Sciences Po will also expand a new suite of resources for Scholars transitioning from education to employment. The suite will include an online African careers fair and access to the University Entrepreneurship Incubator, taking advantage of its formidable network of

employers and alumni working on the African continent and the university's own entrepreneurial landscape. This will complement and build upon the work of the Africa Careers Network, a platform and job matching service implemented by African Leadership Academy which was seeded by The MasterCard Foundation. Sciences Po aims to lead research, in collaboration with other partners in the Scholars Program network, into how higher education institutions can measure their success in supporting Scholars' return to Africa and create change that matters within their communities and nations.

As one of Europe's most internationalized universities, Sciences Po's mission is to educate open-minded and enlightened citizens to allow them to understand the world and transform society. Sciences Po is also home to a vibrant African community of 800 students, 80 teachers and teaching professionals, 20 scholars and PhD candidates and over 600 alumni working in Africa. It has over 20 partnerships with African universities, and has already begun building these further with other institutions in the Scholars Program network.

Sciences Po joins a global network of 28 partner organizations committed to ensuring that all young people, no matter their starting point in life, have an equal chance to obtain a quality education and pursue their aspirations. The Program provides education and leadership development for nearly 35,000 bright, young leaders with a deep personal commitment to changing the world around them. These young people will create change that matters within their communities and will usher in a new era of inclusive prosperity in Africa and beyond.

The first undergraduate scholarships will be awarded in September 2017. More information on eligibility, how to apply, and the selection process is available on the Sciences Po scholarship website: <http://formation.sciences-po.fr/en/content/non-european-union-students>.

Sciences Po will organize information sessions in South Africa and Kenya in March 2017, and in Senegal, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire in May 2017. Sciences Po will announce the dates on its website.

#### **About The MasterCard Foundation:**

The MasterCard Foundation works with visionary organizations to provide greater access to education, skills training and financial services for people living in poverty, primarily in Africa. As one of the largest private foundations, its work is guided by its mission to advance learning and promote financial inclusion to create an inclusive and equitable world. Based in Toronto, Canada, its independence was established by Mastercard when the Foundation was created in 2006. For more information and to sign up for the Foundation's newsletter, please visit [www.mastercardfdn.org](http://www.mastercardfdn.org). Follow the Foundation at @MastercardFdn on Twitter.

#### **About Sciences Po:**

Founded in 1872, Sciences Po is France's leading university in the social sciences. Sciences Po offers degrees at the undergraduate, graduate and executive education levels, and 42 dual degree programmes with a network of 470 partner universities. Today, half of Sciences Po's 13,000 students are international, representing 150 different nationalities. Education at Sciences Po is multidisciplinary, multilingual and outward looking. It also places great emphasis on professional exposure. 87% of graduates find employment within six months of graduating and 38% begin their careers abroad. Sciences Po has a high standard of social responsibility and plays a pioneering role in the promotion of diversity and equal opportunities in higher education. Sciences Po offers a range of financial aid for students of all origins and 30% of the student body hold a scholarship. For more information about Sciences Po: [www.sciencespo.fr/en](http://www.sciencespo.fr/en)

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