

NEWSLETTER

March 2026

Overview of received applications from the regular scholarship call for the 2026/2027 school year

The month of March is usually a symbol of nature waking up, winter going away, and spring coming. That same kind of activity could also be seen in the Hastor Foundation. In the past period, the hardworking Foundation team, together with the help of volunteers, made an overview of all received scholarship applications for the 2026/2027 school year.

All applications were carefully reviewed and processed. Like every year, the members of the Hastor Foundation enjoy reading the life stories of young people, which are really inspiring. After this step, all candidates received a notice about the next phases of the selection process, as well as a list of additional documents they need to collect so their applications can be considered further.



In the coming months, a meeting of the Scholarship Committee of the Hastor Foundation is planned. They have a very difficult task, and it is to make the final decision about which candidates will receive the scholarship for the 2026/2027 school year, based on set criteria and submitted documents. The selected candidates will have the opportunity to sign scholarship contracts in August, before the start of the new school year, and become part of the Hastor Foundation scholarship community.

The Foundation continues to work actively, and a new scholarship call for the 2027/2028 school year is now open for all interested students. Primary and secondary school students who meet the requirements can apply during the next year. Applications can be sent by post or filled out online through the official website.

Through its scholarship program, the Hastor Foundation has been supporting students across Bosnia and Herzegovina for many years, helping their education, personal development, and creating equal opportunities for quality education. Because of this, interest in the scholarships is growing every year, and the selection process aims to recognise students who show potential through their effort, motivation and dedication.

The Foundation will continue to stay committed to its mission, which is supporting young people on their educational path and building a community where knowledge, solidarity, and responsibility are important values.

*Prepared by: Lamija Karadžuz
Translated by: Amila Bajrić*

Signed scholarship contracts with candidates selected through the call for gifted/talented students

Starting from the belief that investing in young people is very important for the development of society, the Hastor Foundation keeps improving its support programs. Before the start of the 2025/2026 school year, contracts were already signed with a new generation of scholarship holders from the regular call, but we decided to do more. Continuing their support mission for youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina, at the end of December 2025, the Foundation announced a special call for gifted and talented students, showing that there is always space for real talent and hard work.



With this program, besides the regular scholarship call, we wanted to highlight students with outstanding results in school and extracurricular activities and give them a chance to develop their potential and contribute to their community. After the selection process, the most promising candidates were chosen, and on March 14, 2026, scholarship contracts were officially signed with them. Thanks to this, our

community is now richer by 55 excellent young people: 24 primary school students who already show strong results in sports, and 31 high school students with great achievements in science.

New scholarship holders and their parents expressed happiness, pride, and gratitude for this opportunity and are excited about the benefits that come with being part of the Hastor Foundation.



“It means a lot to me to become a scholarship holder of the Hastor Foundation. I don’t receive any financial support from my city, so this scholarship will help me a lot. I plan to use the money for stronger competitions and further development,” said Eman Jušić.

Scholarship holder Milana Babić said: ***“I am happy that someone recognised my work and effort and values my results. This is a big motivation for me to continue working and competing. I am sure this scholarship will help me a lot in the future.”***

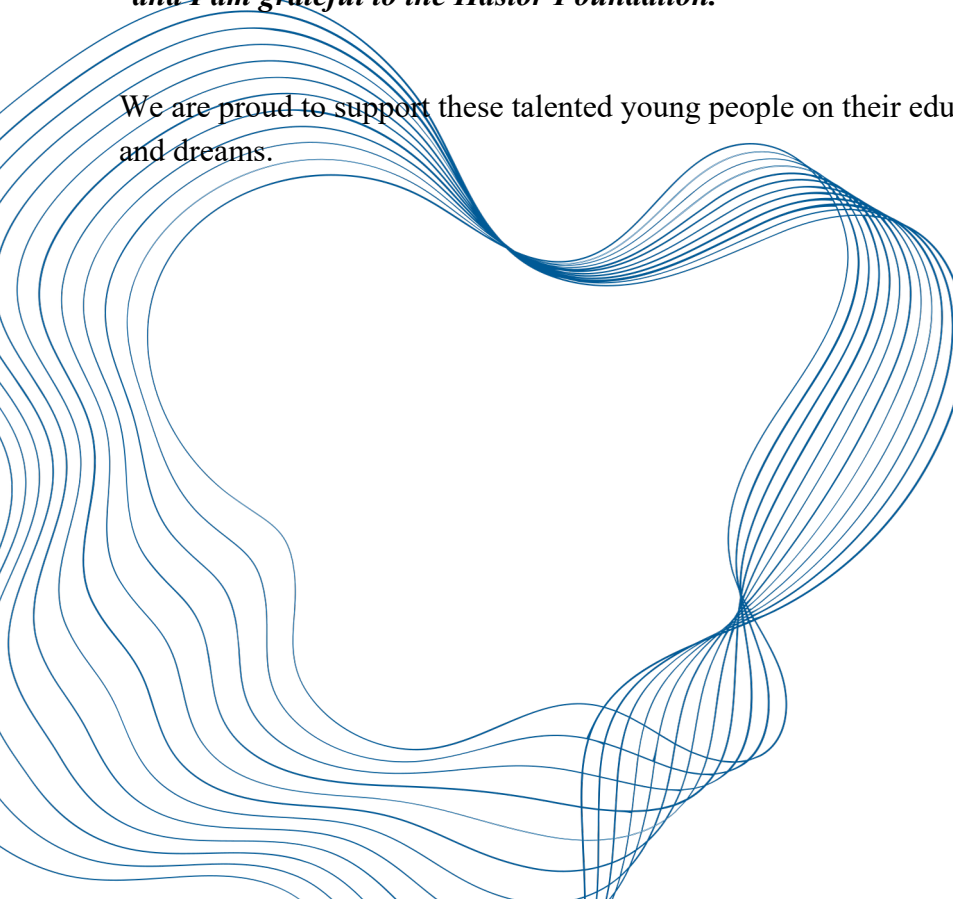
“I am happy and proud that all my effort paid off. I believe this will help me a lot in the future, be a great motivation, and make my path to success easier,” said Tea Novak.

Tea’s mother, Dženana Konjalić, said: ***“As a parent, I am very proud of my daughter and her success. I thank the Hastor Foundation for recognising students’ effort and talent and supporting their future. I especially value the volunteering program because it develops kindness and humanity in young people, which is very important for their further development.”***

The father of our scholarship holder, Iman Malbašić, added: ***“I teach my daughter from a young age to volunteer and build work habits, so I am very glad she will be part of volunteer activities and cooperation with others through the Foundation. I think about how much it would mean to me if I had this opportunity as a child, to come to a building like this with my parents and sign the scholarship contract. This is a big success, and I am grateful to the Hastor Foundation.”***



We are proud to support these talented young people on their educational journey and follow their success and dreams.



The champion story of Mak Cviko in swimming

Twelve-year-old Mak Cviko, a scholarship holder of the Hastor Foundation and a member of the City Water Sports Club Sarajevo (GKVS), has been achieving noticeable results in swimming for years, a sport he has been doing since he was four years old. His persistence, discipline, and daily training in the pool are bringing him more and more success at both national and international competitions.



Mak Cviko

For Mak, February 2026 was especially successful because he participated in two major swimming meets and won a total of four medals. The first competition was the 3rd international swimming meet “Plivački Vučko”, held on February 7 in Sarajevo to mark the anniversary of the Olympic Games in Sarajevo. Around 400 swimmers from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region took part in this competition, and Mak won a silver and a bronze medal. This meet has special symbolism because it reminds of the Olympic spirit of Sarajevo and the values of sport, which are unity, respect, and a constant desire for progress. He continued his winning streak just a week later in Mostar, where he competed at the 8th international swimming meet “Velež Cup 2026”, from which he returned with a gold and a silver medal, confirming his strong performance in the pool.



Out of all swimming disciplines, Mak likes the butterfly stroke the most, which is considered one of the most demanding techniques in swimming. This challenge motivates him even more to push his own limits during training and to constantly improve. His big role model is also one of the most successful swimmers of all time, Michael Phelps, whose Olympic achievements inspire young athletes all around the world.

For Mak, every training and every competition is a new opportunity for progress. On his sports journey, he has the support of his family and coaches from GKVS, as well as the Hastor Foundation, whose investment in young talents is a strong motivation for their further development. With dedicated work, support from people who believe in him, and great love for swimming, this young athlete continues to build his path towards new success in a sport that has become an important part of his life. By following every meter Mak swim, the Hastor Foundation proudly shows how important real support is for turning children’s dreams into a champion reality.

*Prepared by: Lamija Sejdić
Translated by: Amila Bajrić*

Dreams that gallop: Ajša Kazazović at the top of equestrian sport in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Among the scholarship holders of the Hastor Foundation, there are many young people who, with their work and talent, push boundaries in different fields. One of them is thirteen-year-old Ajša Kazazović from Hadžići, an eighth-grade student, who has been achieving notable results in show jumping for years. Even though she is very young, she already has many important competitions and successes behind her.



“I started competing in 2021, but everything actually started much earlier. When I was little, I often spent time in the equestrian club with my parents, so being around horses was always a natural environment for me. Over time, I started training more seriously, and that’s when my first competitions began,” Ajša says at the beginning of our conversation.

The results she has achieved so far show how much effort and dedication pay off. She is especially proud that she has kept the title of the best child rider in Bosnia and Herzegovina in show jumping for two years in a row. Among her achievements, she also highlights 10th place at the World Cup in Belgrade last year, as well as second place at the Croatian championship. However, behind every success there is a lot of work and sacrifice, and the biggest challenge for Ajša is balancing school obligations and training. In all of this, she has great support from her family and coaches, as well as the Hastor Foundation, which recognises the importance of her educational and sports path. This support gives her additional motivation to continue training and improving.



Her future plans are already filled with new challenges: along with many competitions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region, the World Cup in Croatia and the Balkan Championship in Greece stand out as key goals in the coming period

We also asked Ajša if she has any advice for those who want to try this sport, and her message is simple: they should definitely try. As she says, horse riding is a special sport because it offers much more than just competition; it offers time spent in nature and closeness to animals.

Stories like this remind us that big dreams often start from small steps, patience, and love for what we do. When persistence and support from people around us are added to that, the limits of what we can achieve become much wider.

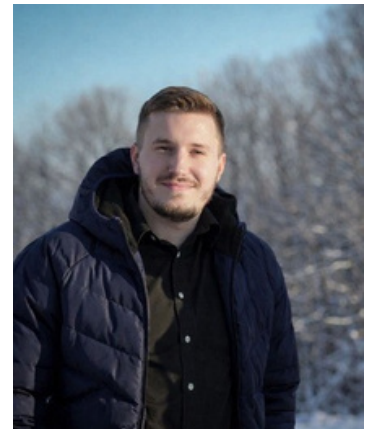
*Prepared by: Aida Suljić
Translated by: Amila Bajrić*

The Secret of Successful Mentorship: A Conversation with Huso Mehmedović

For many, being a student implies balancing between academic and personal obligations. For our scholarship recipient Huso Mehmedović, it means something more, considering that from the very first month of his studies, he took on the responsible role of mentor to elementary and secondary school students from Sapna. Today, Huso is in his fourth year of studies and a proud mentor of two large groups of students, where he strives to approach every volunteer meeting with great care and to create an environment in which younger scholarship recipients gladly enter. Thanks to this atmosphere of mutual trust, support, and motivation, his group records lowest number of absences, which is not a mere statistic, but proof of generations of young people from Sapna who, through joint effort, nurture the vision of the Hastor Foundation.

1. You have been mentoring a large group of students for four years. How would you describe your mentoring experience, and what motivates you most in working with scholarship recipients?

Working with a large group of students is challenging, but at the same time very motivating. The greatest motivation is precisely the opportunity to contribute to the development of young people, that is, to help scholarship recipients master new skills through workshops, solve challenges, and learn something new. I would describe my mentoring experience as valuable and instructive, because it helps me organise myself better and gain experience in working with children.



2. Your groups include more than 40 students, and absences are minimal. How do you manage to motivate students to gladly attend meetings and actively participate?

Students themselves become motivated for workshops if they enjoy them and if they do not feel like they must be there. The key is that they feel the desire to spend time at the workshops and to socialise with other students. One way I achieve this is by giving them partial freedom in creating the workshop, that is, allowing them to choose what they want and do not want to do. For example, each workshop plan consists of several activities that should be carried out during the meeting, but I never strictly follow the plan 100%, because sometimes the activities I designed do not suit the students at the moment. Then I make slight adjustments so that the main goal and theme remain, but the students themselves decide how they will participate. In addition, we organise all workshops so that scholarship recipients interact with the topic through quizzes, games, or competitions, either in groups or individually, so that they actively participate and have fun.



3. Mentoring meetings are often more than formal gatherings. How are they organised to be interesting and useful for students?

When organising a volunteer meeting, I try as much as possible to place myself in the role of a student, since I myself attended meetings organised by other mentors. I know that meetings with interaction among scholarship recipients and fun through games and quizzes are the ones you want to attend and do not see as merely formal gatherings. That is exactly how I approach my workshops – I position myself as their friend, but with enough authority for the meeting to remain on the planned topic. I achieve this by agreeing with the scholarship recipients on what they want to do, whether they will read interesting facts related to the topic themselves, or I will read them, and whether they will answer questions in written or oral form. I offer options, and they choose what suits them better, making the workshop active and adapted to them. In this way, I enable them to participate and feel free, while at the same time achieving the goals of the workshop.



4. Is there a moment or experience with your students that has particularly remained in your memory during these years of mentoring?

There are moments that have particularly stayed in my memory. The first is my beginning as a volunteer mentor. For years before that, I attended meetings as a student, but when I came to my first workshop as a mentor, I had no idea how it felt to lead workshops and communicate with scholarship recipients. While I was reading the Rulebook of the Hastor Foundation and the obligations of scholarship

recipients, I raised my head and at one moment realised how it looks from the other perspective – 20 to 25 elementary school students sitting in front of me and listening attentively. That look of theirs has remained in my memory.

The second moment is the end of one workshop, where the scholarship recipients did not ask for breaks nor when they would go home, but instead participated fully and did what was planned. When I said at the end that we were going home, I heard reactions that they were sorry the workshop had ended and questions about when the next meeting would be. Such moments, for me as a mentor, provide a sense of fulfilment – in those moments I know that I am doing the job properly and that what I provide to the scholarship recipients truly has meaning.

5. What would you say to scholarship recipients who are about to begin their mentoring journey in the Hastor Foundation?

To scholarship recipients who are just beginning their mentoring journey, I would say to use every opportunity for learning and socialising. It is important that they are curious, ask questions, and are not afraid of mistakes, because it is precisely through them that they learn the most. Also, active participation in workshops works in their favour – in that way, they build themselves, gain experience that will certainly be useful to them one day, and gradually step into the role of a teacher or professor, which is a valuable experience and a beautiful story. And let them know that through interaction and joint work, the experience becomes unforgettable.

Prepared by: Adina Jusufspahić

Translated by: Maida Avdić

Fragments of Volunteer Stories



In a time in which values often seem to be measured by speed, success, and personal achievements, there exist those quiet, almost unnoticeable moments that restore faith in what is essential: in kindness, togetherness, and a sincere desire to help others. Such moments do not come with great noise, do not seek attention or recognition, yet they leave a mark that is not easily erased. It is precisely through a series of volunteer activities carried out across Bosnia and Herzegovina during March 2026 that young people demonstrated that humanity is not an idea, but a practice; not an abstract concept, but concrete action that changes everyday life.

In Sarajevo, students, within the premises of the association Pomozi.ba, became part of a much larger system – a system of solidarity that functions thanks to people willing to invest time, effort, and care. During the month of Ramadan, when the scope of humanitarian work significantly increases, their presence carried particular weight.

The activity was not only physical engagement, but also a lesson in responsibility and organization. Students were divided into teams, where each segment of work had a clearly defined purpose. While one team carefully inspected and sorted clothing, paying attention to every detail and the quality of donated items, another coordinated transport and logistics, ensuring that packages were prepared stably and safely for distribution. A third team worked on sorting hygiene supplies, where precision and responsibility were of key importance.



What makes this activity particularly significant is not only the execution of tasks, but the way in which the students approached the work. Through the process, they developed an eye for detail, but also an awareness that every action they take directly affects the end users. A special moment occurred when they independently devised a system for labelling packages, thereby further improving work efficiency. That moment was not only an example of creativity, but also proof of their ability to recognise a problem and offer a solution – a skill that goes beyond the framework of the activity itself.

At the same time, in Busovača, a different but equally powerful story was unfolding. Through the making of small gifts from dates, students demonstrated how a small gesture can carry great significance. The activity began with planning and the division of tasks, where everyone found their role: from writing messages, to packaging, to the final shaping of the gifts. The process of creation was just as important as the distribution itself, as it allowed students to develop a sense of belonging and cooperation through joint work.



When the gifts were finally distributed to passersby, employees in local institutions, and elderly individuals, what occurred was not merely an exchange of items, but an exchange of emotions. Smiles, brief conversations, and expressions of gratitude created an atmosphere that reminds us that a community exists precisely through such small but meaningful interactions.

In Zvornik, the focus was on the inner world of the individual, on understanding happiness and its true meaning. On the occasion of the International Day of Happiness, students, through discussion and practical activities, explored what happiness represents for them and to what extent it depends on material things. Through simple examples from everyday life, such as socializing, family support, or success at school, they learned to recognize the value of small moments. Writing messages about happiness and distributing them within the local community further extended this idea beyond the classroom. In this way, students became carriers of the message that happiness is not something to wait for, but something actively created through relationships, gratitude, and presence.



In Živinice, attention was directed toward those who have no voice – abandoned animals. Through discussion about the issue of stray dogs and their position within the community, students developed empathy and awareness of the responsibility humans have toward other living beings. The practical part of the activity, the making of feeders, was a combination of creativity and functionality. Using available materials, students jointly devised solutions that can have a long-term impact. This activity was not only help for animals, but also a lesson in care, responsibility, and the importance of action.



In Bugojno and Srebrenik, topics that often remain unspoken were opened: stress, emotional states, and mental health. Through workshops, students had the opportunity to recognize their own emotions, understand the causes of stress, and learn techniques that can help them in everyday life. Activities such as “recognizing triggers” or creating a “calm-down box” enabled them to develop personal strategies for coping with challenges.

Particular value lay in the exchange of experiences and open conversation, which contributed to creating a sense of safety and mutual understanding. The creation and distribution of messages of support within the community further emphasized the importance of empathy and solidarity, reminding us that conversation is often the first step toward a solution.

In Jablanica, through the action of arranging the space in front of the museum “Battle for the Wounded on the Neretva,” students demonstrated how care for the community also implies the preservation of cultural and public spaces. Through joint work, cleaning, and arranging, they developed a sense of responsibility toward their surroundings, as well as awareness of the importance of cultural institutions. This activity combined education, physical work, and socializing, creating an experience that goes beyond classical learning.

All these activities, although different in their approach, share a common essence – the active participation of young people in building a better society. Through concrete tasks, students learned that change does not occur on its own, but requires engagement, initiative, and a willingness to take responsibility.

What is particularly encouraging is the fact that in these activities, students showed much more than expected – they demonstrated maturity, creativity, the ability to cooperate, and above all, a sincere desire to contribute. In every one of their actions, there was a clear awareness that even the smallest contribution can have great significance.

And perhaps it is precisely in that simple yet powerful truth that the meaning of everything lies – that the world is not changed by big words, but by small, consistent steps. That humanity is not something learned only through theory, but something lived through actions.

Because every shared message, every packed package, every crafted feeder, and every sincere conversation leaves a trace. And when those traces come together, they form a path – a path toward a society that understands, supports, and does not forget what it means to be human.

“If There Were No Love for the Native Land, Weak Nations Would Disappear”

(Mustafa Ejubović Sheikh Jujo)



That human within us is inseparably connected to the soil from which we originate. We do not hate what is foreign, but we do not give up our ancestral land for all the riches that roam this transient world. Is there anyone who thinks that Bosnia is merely ground beneath the feet? It is the scent of coffee in a fildžan, the comfort of one’s own home, the ewer that clinks against the tray, and the table that is our blessing and togetherness. The homeland is also the neighbour who says: “Come, you are welcome,” and even when he has little, offers his hand as to his closest kin. So, I ask you, what is a human being outside his own land? What is life worth to him, far from his own town, the breadth of the city and the scent of his mother’s courtyard in which, with a trembling step, he first rushed into the embrace of the earth? What is a people among whom sevdah is not sung, that heavy yet gentle song that can reopen the deepest wound, but also heal it? Torn from our native soil, we would be a leaf without a branch, a river that in its surge has forgotten its own bed, and a bird that in a foreign flock seeks peace in vain. Deprived of home, we are not travellers, but only lost shadows wandering in a foreign land...

Love for the homeland is the one that knows how to weep and forgive, to clench its teeth and remain. It is the voice that comes from the depths of the being that says: ***“You can take my roof, but you cannot take my sky. You can extinguish my hearth, but you cannot kill the love in my chest!”***

Our endurance lies in that invisible ember which, even under merciless assaults, flares into an even greater flame. Our people are not without scars, but they do not turn them into hatred, but into wisdom. Without love, we would disappear quietly, without a trace, but with it we remain like a stećak in the wind. Scratched, but upright. As long as there is love, there will be us. Do not fear, wise sheikh, your word still lives in us today, bitter as wormwood and sweet as sherbet, reminding us that this soil is our inseparable debt and that we can repay it only with a pure heart. Let every letter of this writing be a witness before the face of time – Bosnia is our eternal refuge, and love for it is a truth that neither thunderous storms nor fires can erase. We are a people who do not disappear under foreign assaults, but endure because we love. Love is the only force that not even death itself can harm.

Enisa Tutundžić

(2nd place in the competition of the best literary works on the occasion of the Independence Day of Bosnia and Herzegovina)





We invite you
*to join our mission and contribute
to fulfilling the dreams of prom-
ising students and young people
who need our help.*

If you would like to support the work of the Hastor Foundation, you can make a donation to one of the following bank accounts:

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