

Kannelle, Head of Sciences Po's East Africa Office in Nairobi, graduated in International Public Management, PSIA



Kannelle Hughes has graduated in International Public Management (now known as International Governance & Diplomacy). She is Head of Sciences Po's East Africa Office in Nairobi, Kenya.

Not everyone knows that Sciences Po has a permanent delegation in Africa. Could you tell us more about the Nairobi's office of Sciences Po and your role and mission?

The Nairobi office opened, within the Alliance Française building, in 2018 as part of Sciences Po's internationalisation strategy. We have ambitious plans for Africa which required a permanent physical presence. As Manager for East Africa, my mission, in short, consists in importing our brand and increasing its attractiveness within the region. I aim to meet this goal by conducting promotional activities at high schools and fairs, strengthening relations with various partners, academic or otherwise, developing our network and hosting delegations amongst other missions. I also provide support for future and current exchange students and alumni.

How did you secure this role?

After obtaining my master's I worked close to two years for a Japanese NGO operating in the field of Higher Education and Development. I then pursued a second master's in Cultural Studies during which I had the opportunity to intern as a Culture and Communications officer for the Alliance Française of Saint-Lucia. The director insisted that I create a LinkedIn page where I saw the job offer for this position! The combination of having studied and done student jobs at Sciences Po, having worked for an Africa Initiative program in the Higher Education sector and presenting a good understanding of the French diplomatic network certainly played in my favour.

What is the current trend of the workplace?

Right now, the key work is expansion. Most of my activities are centred around that idea.

What skills employers are seeking?

In my opinion, employers are looking for candidates that have knowledge and skills in the domain they are applying for but with the ability to adapt and learn quickly. In some cases, soft skills are becoming just as important as hard skills. Those that master both gain the upper hand.

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