

## Why Did the Winner of the Open Doors Olympiad Choose SPbPU Master's Degree Program

Nina KOLOSOVA is the winner of the [International Olympiad Open Doors: Russian Scholarship project](#). In 2019, she took part in the intellectual competition for international students, successfully passed it and got the opportunity to study for a master's degree at the Polytechnic University on the basis of the quota for education of the Russian Government. This year, the [qualifying stage of Open Doors has started again](#). We met with Nina to find out if it was difficult to participate in the Olympiad, where to find examples of competition tasks, as well as - why she chose Polytechnic University and how she is studying for her Master's degree. Read about this and more in our interview.

**- Nina, as far as we know, you have been studying in Russia for a long time. Tell us why did you decide to come to St. Petersburg?**

- I came to Russia 5 years ago from Uzbekistan. I was subconsciously sure that I would enter a university in St. Petersburg, although until the very late I did not know the results of my exams. Moscow seemed to me a big and uncomfortable city with too many people. On the other hand, I didn't want to go to a smaller city, because I am from the capital city. By the way, my friends from Russia at first were surprised when they learned that we have a subway in Tashkent. Many even want to come and check it out in person.

**- Did you want to study at a particular university? By what criteria did you choose a university?**

- I was considering various specialities. At first I was thinking about the University of Architecture and Civil Engineering. I was going through Rossotrudnichestvo, passed all basic exams, and at the interview I was asked where else I would want to enter except architecture. I started to inquire about heat, hydro and electricity. I still remember being told: "Listen, girl, why would you go there?" And my whole family studied and works in these professions, so these areas are interesting for me too. That's how I entered the Bachelor's degree program at Polytechnic University and started studying thermal energy. Other universities I did not even consider: SPbPU is a priority among universities with this specialty.



**- And where did you learn about the Open Doors International Olympiad?**

- I learned about the Olympiad here, at Polytechnic University. It is quite simple to take part in it: you need to apply through the website, attach your education certificate, fill out a questionnaire, and attach various diplomas, certificates, scientific publications, etc. In the second round, participants perform tasks on specialized subjects; examples of tasks are available on the website; one can view them and practice. I was a little worried about this part, but everything went well. When I participated in the Olympiad, few people knew about it.

**- Tell us more about the program you are studying at Polytechnic University. What do you like about it? Are there difficulties in learning?**

- I am studying under the program "Technology of electric and thermal energy production": I study thermal energy. Now I am in the Master's degree program; most of the subjects are absolutely specialized. There are many special programs that are used at enterprises. We study diagnostics of equipment, modes of operation of heat and power equipment, automation. In my opinion, it is more difficult to study in the Master's degree program because many people combine studying with work, and there is already a need to penetrate into the professional field.

**- What are your favorite disciplines?**

- Probably, these are modes of operation of thermal power plants. This subject is taught by my scientific advisor. A young specialist, she presents the material incredibly interestingly. I also like diagnostics of equipment, because now thermal imaging cameras are installed everywhere, and you can learn how it works, how it is arranged, what are the differences. It is so exciting!

**- Do you live in a dormitory? Is everything fine?**

- Yes, I live in one of the SPbPU dormitories. For four years I lived in the same room, and on the fifth I moved to another. I am sure that I will miss the dormitory, although at first I had to get used to a lot of things. It is interesting to live here - you are surrounded by people of different cultures and nationalities. It's great when you come home, and you are always met by someone, you do not feel lonely and sad. During the pandemic we were closed for two weeks. Friends and classmates came to my house under the windows and we communicated like this. They brought us food and passed it in plastic bags either through the security on which the room number was indicated, or through the window on a rope.

**- What's your impression of the teachers?**

- The teachers are true professionals. I remember many of them with a smile: for example, our teacher of physics was Alexander Elektronovich VASILYEV. This is his real name! Alexander Elektronovich is a charming and interesting person. When you meet him at the university, he always smiles and says hello in return.

Teachers always help and coordinate our scientific work. At Polytechnic University we often have contests for scholarships, grants, projects. Last year, Rosatom organized a project shift for international students; we went to the Sirius Educational Center in Sochi. There I got acquainted with many interesting guys from different countries where Rosatom plans to build nuclear power plants, including Serbia, Uzbekistan, and even guys from the African continent.

**- Is it easy to find a common language with other students? What language are your lectures in?**

- Yes, we quickly became friends with my group, and after graduating from the Bachelor's degree program we all together continued their studies at the Master's degree level. My program is in Russian, but our institute also has several other [international educational programs](#). Some of our teachers also give lectures at international programs. The study is interesting: once we had a seminar on numerical methods, and we observed the distribution of energy inside a small button phone. Once we participated in modeling emergency situations, for example, we had to check the strength of a building if a large object crashes into it.

**- Do you have many practical classes? What do you do on them?**

- We have equal amounts of theory and practical classes. It was pretty tough during the distance learning without the possibility of practicing in laboratories.

Mostly we work in programs, on laboratory installations. For example, we created a thermal diagram of a thermal power plant: these are several connected power units. We also work in a special INSIS program, solve equations numerically, and find the distribution of pressure, temperature and other parameters inside the units. I like it all very much.

**- How do you plan to apply the knowledge gained in the future? Are you thinking of working in your profession?**

- Я I would like to try to work in my profession, but it is not easy for a foreign citizen to do it. Nevertheless, I will try: for example, I will to get a Position at Power Machines, which are actively developing cooperation with Polytechnic University.

**- Would you advise other students to participate in the Open Doors Olympiad??**

- Participation in the Open Doors Olympiad is absolutely cool! I told all my friends and acquaintances about this Olympiad, and now even more people will learn about it through interviews. Of course, it's a little scary to decide to participate. But why not give it a try? Example tasks are on the website of the Olympiad, it is very easy to prepare. This year, the organizers have added the possibility for postgraduate students to enter the Olympiad, as well as many new programs. So you can enter almost any specialty and area of studies.

**- Nina, thank you for an interesting interview! We wish you successful learning and achievement of your goals!**

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