

Moscow's HSE University Buys Drones for Russian Military

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Rector of the Higher School of Economics Nikita Anisimov. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

Moscow's Higher School of Economics (HSE), one of Russia's premier universities that was long considered a bastion of liberal values amid growing conservatism in the country, is raising money to purchase drones for the Russian military, the university's rector said in an [interview](#) published on Thursday.

"HSE students serve in a reconnaissance battalion but they lack reconnaissance drones," rector Nikita Anisimov told the pro-Russian Luhansk Information Center during a visit to the partially occupied region of eastern Ukraine.

"We've announced a collection for such drones because they're not cheap, but at the same time, they serve as expendable material," Anisimov said, adding that funds are being raised through a [foundation](#) set up by the pro-Kremlin TV host Vladimir Solovyov.

Since 2022, HSE has [supplied](#) drones to its students fighting in Moscow's war on neighboring Ukraine, according to the independent youth news outlet Doxa, which Russia in January

[blacklisted](#) as “undesirable.”

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Earlier this month, Anisimov [said](#) support for student soldiers and their families was HSE’s “top priority.”

While HSE remains one of Russia’s top-rated institutions of higher learning for the social sciences, the university’s administration has increasingly bent to political pressure from the authorities and [cracked down on dissent](#) among students and staff, especially since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Anisimov was among 300 university leaders from across Russia who in 2022 signed an open letter in support of President Vladimir Putin’s decision to send troops across the border. The European University Association, which represents more than 800 universities across Europe, later suspended the rector.

Times Higher Education, which previously ranked HSE in the top 25 universities worldwide, no longer [lists](#) Russian universities on its website.

In a sign of the school’s pro-war shift, HSE announced in February the creation of the Institute of Military Economics and Strategy headed by [retired](#) Admiral Sergei Avakyants.

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