

Contemplative Scholarship Information

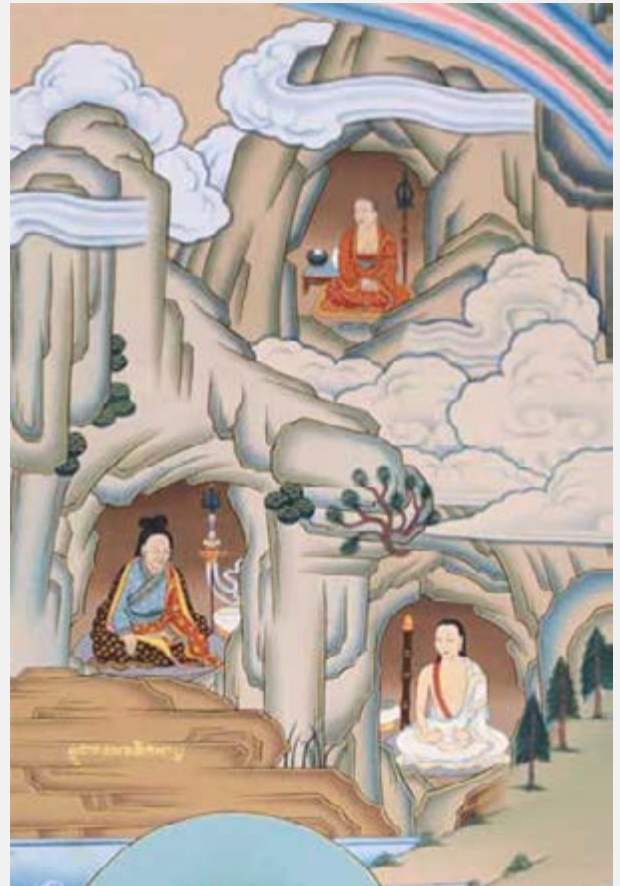
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General Introduction

The two facets of Buddhist teachings—scriptures (*āgama-dharma*, *lung gi chos*) and realization (*adhigama-dharma*, *rtogs pa'i chos*)—are transmitted through study, reflection, and meditation. This threefold process, vital for the training of Buddhist practitioners, is facilitated by institutes for study and retreat centers.

Beginning with the founding of Nālandā University in ancient India, through the early monasteries of Samyé, Sangpu, and Shalu, and continuing now in the new or reestablished Tibetan monastic colleges in India and Nepal, intensive study has flourished for over fifteen hundred years within Buddhist institutes dedicated to the pursuit of higher learning. While intensive contemplative practice was generally pursued in solitary retreats lasting months, years, or even a lifetime, in more recent times, the tradition of group three-year retreats has been found to be particularly conducive to meditative training.

In recognition of the growing interest of Western Buddhists in undertaking serious studies, as well as long-term contemplative retreats, Tsadra Foundation is pleased to offer two scholarship initiatives: Advanced Studies Scholarships and Advanced Contemplative Scholarships.



Advanced Contemplative Scholarship Description

Tsadra Foundation's Advanced Contemplative Scholarships offer Western practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism an opportunity to pursue long-term contemplative training.

There are many ways to approach the vast and profound nature of the Tibetan contemplative domain through individual and collective retreats. The group three-year retreat is a most effective means for achieving a comprehensive introduction to advanced meditation while facilitating the development of the discipline necessary for a long-term contemplative practice.

A number of traditional three-year retreat centers now exist in the West. Tsadra Foundation Advanced Contemplative Scholarships are available to individuals entering such three-year retreats and to three-year retreat graduates who wish to undertake further solitary retreat for one year or longer.

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Eligibility

To qualify for this scholarship, a person wishing to enter a traditional group three-year retreat must have been accepted as a participant in such a retreat. A retreat graduate applying for a scholarship for solitary retreat must present a clearly defined retreat program and demonstrate that physical and support conditions are present for the successful realization of the proposed retreat.

In addition Tsadra Foundation will be looking for the following qualifications:

- Applicant must have studied and practiced Tibetan Buddhism for at least five years.
- Applicant must have completed the Preliminary Practices of the specific tradition with which the retreat is associated.
- Applicant should have a rudimentary knowledge of the Tibetan language (depending on the requirement of the retreat center.)
- Applicant should exhibit the qualities of a successful practitioner: emotional maturity, flexibility, modesty, selflessness, kindness, humor, etc.
- Applicant must demonstrate financial need justifying the scholarship.

At the present time scholarships are limited to retreats taking place in the US, Canada, France, Spain and the U.K.

Financial Award

The Advanced Contemplative Scholarships are based on the applicant's need and their retreat budget. While the costs of retreat centers vary, the amount allocated is based on our study of a number of group and individual retreat situations. It assumes modest living conditions, takes into consideration normal participation in the operating costs of the retreat, and includes some allowance for basic personal expenses. Scholarships generally range between \$400 and \$1,000 per month. The foundation takes particular note of and appreciates candidates who have made the effort to find partial support for their retreat costs before applying for a scholarship.

Scholarships for those participating in group three-year retreats will be for the duration of the retreat. Scholarships for solitary retreats will be awarded on a year-by-year basis.

The foundation does not offer support for building or infrastructure costs associated with the applicant's retreat project.

Application Procedure

Tsadra Foundation Advanced Contemplative Scholarships are made available each year to a number of worthy applicants. Applications are accepted each spring up to the application deadline of August 1st for scholarships that will begin the following year:



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Once the application period has closed, the applications will be examined and short-listed candidates will be contacted to schedule personal interviews. Final results of the selection process will be announced by the end of November.

Those wishing to apply for an Advanced Contemplative Scholarship should submit the following documents to Tsadra Foundation before August 1st:

Three-year retreat applicants

- A letter from the lama of the retreat confirming that you have been accepted as a participant
- A description of the retreat center, the retreat program, and the prospective dates of the retreat.
- An outline of qualifications for entering your retreat and the extent to which you satisfy these qualifications.
- A letter from the retreat manager or administrator specifying the retreat costs.

Solitary retreat applicants (three-year retreat graduates)

- A description of your proposed hermitage and of the practical support conditions that will allow you to accomplish your solitary retreat.
- A description of your retreat program including practices and schedules.
- A detailed budget of your retreat costs.

All applicants

- Completed application form (see Documentation Download page.)
- A standard curriculum vitae detailing your study and work history.
- A Dharma curriculum vitae detailing your Dharma history (both study and practice).
- A recent head and shoulders photo.
- A clear description of your financial situation, including any personal savings or income, as well as any external sponsorship or support and your efforts to secure such support.
- A letter of recommendation from your current lama or meditation instructor. In the case of retreat graduates, you may alternatively request a letter of recommendation from a Buddhist colleague.
- A letter of recommendation from an individual who is not a lama nor a family member. Both letters of recommendation should be submitted directly to the foundation by those writing them on your behalf.
- Completed Document Checklist (see Documentation Download page.)

All materials should be sent in pdf format to: contemplativescholarship@tsadra.org

Deadlines for Scholarships

- Application deadline is August 1, of each year.
- Short-listed candidates must be available for interviews from August 15 to October 31.
- Final decisions will be announced by November 30.

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Reporting

Scholarship recipients will be required to submit an annual report to the Director of Contemplative Scholarships at the end of each calendar year for the duration of the scholarship. This report should describe in detail the scholarship activity including retreat schedule and program, progress made and any difficulties encountered in accomplishing the purpose of the scholarship during this period. You are to inform Tsadra Foundation whether or not there were any periods of time when you were not available to accomplish this activity. If there were such periods, you are to indicate their length in days or weeks. You may be required to reimburse the Foundation grant funds for these periods of inactivity.

Not more than one month following the completion of the retreat, you are to provide a final report including (i) an activity summary similar to your annual reports for the entire scholarship grant period; (ii) an honest appraisal of your retreat detailing what you feel were its strengths and weaknesses; (iii) how you feel your retreat may have prepared you to benefit others and generally have a positive impact in the world after your retreat.

All reports are to be submitted to the foundation as pdf files. Scholarship funds are generally disbursed annually. Disbursement of scholarship funds for a subsequent period is dependent upon timely submission of the year-end report.