

The Growth of the Nuns' Jang Gonchoe

The number of nuns wanting to participate in the Jang Gonchoe is increasing steadily. Each year about 400 to 500 nuns take part.

An average of seven nunneries take part each year. All nunneries are welcome to join when they can. The main obstacle to wider participation is funding – for travel, food, and accommodation for nuns to attend.

- Dolma Ling Nunnery & Institute – participant since 1995
- Jangchup Choeling Nunnery - participant since 1995
- Jamyang Choeling Nunnery - participant since 1995
- Geden Choeling Nunnery - participant since 1995
- Khacho Ghakil Ling, Nepal – yearly participant
- Thugjee Choeling Nunnery, Nepal – yearly participant
- The Buddhist Education Centre from Kinnaur – yearly participant
- Drikung Nunnery – participant once
- Dongyu Gyatseling Nunnery – occasional participant
- Sherab Choeling Nunnery, Spiti – occasional participant
- Yangchen Choeling Nunnery, Spiti – occasional participant
- Jampa Choeling Nunnery, Spiti – occasional participant
- (The nuns from the latter three nunneries now hold their own inter-nunnery debate session each year in Spiti.)



Under guidance from the Tibetan Nuns Project, the nuns themselves have taken on the organizing role. Since 2011, a nuns' committee formed with two representatives from each participating nunnery has taken responsibility for making all the plans and arrangements for the session. The venue of the Jang Gonchoe site is rotated among the participating nunneries. It costs more when the debate session is held in Nepal or in South India because most of the nunneries are situated in northern India.

The annual cost of the Jang Gonchoe varies from between \$13,000 and \$20,000 depending on the location, the number of nuns participating, and the year.

The Tibetan Nuns Project fundraises for \$100 scholarships to enable nuns to take part. Each year, the Tibetan Nuns Project ensures that at least 25 nuns and two Buddhist philosophy teachers from each participating nunnery are sponsored to attend.

As the number of nuns wanting to participate in the session is increasing steadily, when more than 25 from a particular nunnery wish to attend they have to find the funding individually or through their nunnery. The total number of extra nuns that can attend depends on the availability of accommodation in the host nunnery.

Creating an Enduring Legacy: The Endowment Fund for the Jang Gonchoe

The practice of debate takes many years to fully master, and it is critical to fostering the nun's ability to assume roles as fully qualified teachers of their tradition. September 2015 marked the 20th anniversary of the nuns' Jang Gonchoe and the building of their own strong tradition of debate. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the Tibetan Nuns Project has so far been able to support the Jang Gonchoe for almost 20 years through major gifts and \$100 scholarships to the nuns. It is our wish to create an endowment for the Jang Gonchoe so it may continue for years to come.

The amount needed for full endowment at current exchange and interest rates in India is \$300,000. We have received an initial gift of \$35,000 from a nun living in France and further gifts totalling \$27,000, leaving \$238,000 still to raise for the Endowment.

By donating to the endowment you are not only helping to preserve the Tibetan culture, but you are opening up a centuries-old tradition to the nuns and enabling and empowering them to become great teachers in their own right. The benefit of this is inestimable and will be an enduring legacy for generations to come. This is a unique opportunity to build capacity and equality for the nuns, to foster the dharma for future generations, and to ensure that this unique tradition continues and grows.

Testimonials

"Last year the Jang Gonchoe was an excellent one. We debated till midnight each day. We were overjoyed to share our ideas and thoughts. There were about 400 nuns and all were full with enthusiasm and eager to debate with one another."

Tenzin Nyidon, Dolma Ling Nunnery & Institute

"I would like to thank you so much for supporting our education. It is all because of your support that I'm getting all these opportunities to study dharma in Dolma Ling. It has been 10 years now since I'm studying here. It is only through debate and discussion with teachers and dharma friends that has helped me to improve my knowledge and understanding of the teaching in a much better way."

Tenzin Chonyi, Dolma Ling Nunnery

To donate to the Jang Gonchoe Endowment Fund you can:

1. Make a gift online at www.tnp.org
2. Call our office in Seattle, US at 1-206-652-8901 (Monday-Friday, 8-4) and make a donation via credit card.
3. Mail a check to:
The Tibetan Nuns Project
(for the Jang Gonchoe Endowment Fund)
815 Seattle Boulevard South #216, Seattle, WA 98134 USA
4. Give a gift of securities. Please see <https://tnp.org/donate-securities/>