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## **Tibetan Nuns Project Proposal for the Yangchen Lophel Study Center**

### **The Proposal**

Twenty Tibetan Buddhist nuns made history in December 2016, becoming the first Tibetan women to successfully pass all the exams for the Geshema degree, equivalent to a Doctorate in Buddhist philosophy.

Their success fulfills a longstanding wish of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and marks a new chapter in the development of education for ordained Buddhist women and is a major accomplishment for Tibetan women.

This occasion is also a milestone for the Tibetan Nuns Project, which was founded in 1987 to provide education and humanitarian aid to Tibetan Buddhist nuns living in India. A number of the Geshema candidates were illiterate when they escaped from Tibet. To reach this historic milestone, the Tibetan Nuns Project had to build an educational system from the ground up.

"Educating women is powerful," says Rinchen Khando Choegyal, Founder and Director of the Tibetan Nuns Project. "It's not just about books. It is also about helping nuns acquire the skills they need to run their own institutions and create models for future success and expansion. It's about enabling the nuns to be teachers in their own right and to take on leadership roles at a critical time in our nation's history."

"But now I want to go even further. My dream is to be able to respond to the many requests of lay women across the world, and to offer them the opportunity to join us in their study of Tibetan Buddhism."

To make that happen we need to create the space to allow lay women from across the globe to pursue their aspirations to study.

This proposal seeks funding to construct a multi-purpose facility called the Yangchen Lophel Study Center to enable primarily laywomen to study at Dolma Ling Nunnery and Institute. The building will also be used to provide adequate accommodation and facilities for visiting nuns when the annual inter-nunnery debate session is held at Dolma Ling and also when the Geshema exams are held there. It is intended that the facility will become self-supporting through income from students and organizations holding seminars and workshops at the facility.

### **The Yangchen Lophel Study Center**

Once created, the Yangchen Lophel Study Center will provide accommodation and study facilities to visiting nuns and 32 lay women students, both Tibetan and those from abroad. It will also be able to host large gatherings as needed. Teacher's accommodation, office and reception, kitchens, dining and meeting rooms are all included in the plan.



### **The Structure**

This center will be built in an ecologically sensitive manner on the vacant piece of land adjacent to the Dolma Ling debate courtyard. At a planned total area of 20,000 square feet, it is expected to provide:

- ✓ 32 single student rooms with bathrooms
- ✓ 4 classrooms
- ✓ a large first-floor multipurpose room, including library and meeting facilities
- ✓ kitchens, stores, and a large dining hall
- ✓ staff and teacher accommodation

### **About the Tibetan Nuns Project**

The Tibetan Nuns Project was established in 1987 in response to a tremendous influx of nuns escaping from Tibet and arriving in northern India seeking religious, educational, and political freedom. The founders wanted to provide facilities for educating ordained Tibetan women and to empower and improve their overall status.

The Tibetan Nuns Project's mission is to provide basic care for ordained Buddhist women from Tibet and to develop an educational program that combines traditional values and philosophical studies with the essential skills and knowledge required to function in the modern world. It aspires to preserve the unique Tibetan Buddhist tradition and to establish a new tradition of highly qualified and recognized female teachers. In doing this, we have also opened our facilities to women from the Himalayan regions of India, Bhutan, and other Buddhist countries.

## **About Dolma Ling Nunnery and Institute**

Dolma Ling Nunnery is one of the Tibetan Nuns Project's largest and most ambitious projects. Established in 1994 as a specifically non-sectarian study institute, Dolma Ling plays a leading role in the empowerment and development of the Tibetan nuns. Over 240 nuns are currently studying the full curriculum of higher philosophical studies towards gaining the Geshe degree, which was opened up to women for the first time only in 2013.

Increasing numbers of lay students also apply to study here, both foreign and Tibetan, local and from abroad. However, as accommodation within the nunnery is limited, only a few have so far been able to join the program.

## **Estimated Budget for the Yangchen Lophel Study Center**

\$950,000 US Dollars

### **To donate to the Yangchen Lophel Study Center you can:**

1. Make a gift online at [www.tnp.org](http://www.tnp.org) under "General Donation" and put "Yangchen Lophel Study Center" in the comment box.
2. Canadian donors can receive a tax receipt for their donation if they give through the Tibetan Nuns Project Giving Group at the Chimp Foundation. Please add a comment that the gift is for the Yangchen Lophel Study Center. See <https://chimp.net/groups/tibetan-nuns-project>
3. Call our office in Seattle, US at 1-206-652-8901 (Monday-Friday, 8-4) and make a donation via credit card.
4. Mail a check to:  
The Tibetan Nuns Project  
(for Yangchen Lophel Study Center)  
815 Seattle Boulevard South #216  
Seattle, WA 98134 USA
5. Give a gift of securities. Please see <https://tnp.org/donate-securities/>

### **For more information, please contact either:**

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