

*The following is a letter from the current director of the Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo Translator Program, Lhundub Chodron, dated June 7, 2009*

Dear Friends,

It is our sincere wish that the next Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo Translator Program (LRZTP) will begin in the first quarter of 2011 in Dharamsala, India. It is difficult to be more definitive than this since the timing of the next program is largely dependent on the availability of qualified instructors. This information will be more readily available next year, closer to the completion of the current program.

The LRZTP interpreter training program has been established by Lama Zopa Rinpoche of the Foundation For The Preservation of The Mahayana Tradition (FPMT) to fulfil the need within the FPMT to provide qualified native speaking interpreters for the resident geshees in our dharma centers. For this reason, priority is given to applicants who have connections with FPMT. The last four LRZTP's have graduated 22 students, many of whom have successfully gone on to become professional translators and interpreters.

LRZTP is a four year program, two years of classroom style language training in Dharamsala, followed by two years of practical application as an interpreter in an FPMT dharma center. Students who are not contracted from the outset to work for a specific center are placed by LRZTP at the end of the two-year study period in India at a center deemed most suitable for them (most likely in one's own country, though not always).

Students must have a good grasp of English as classes are conducted in English. In the past the course began with the Tibetan alphabet and did not presume any prior knowledge of Tibetan. However, the next program will likely require a beginner/intermediate level of Tibetan prior to beginning the course. For students who are not at this level, it is our hope to offer a 2 month Tibetan Language Intensive prior to the start of the program, which will bring all students up to the same level.

Historically the cost of the course has been subsidized, with students paying a total of US \$3900 for the two years. In the future, course fees may vary depending on the continuation of the existing subsidy and changes in the cost of living in Dharamsala. The cost of the course also includes a subsidized trip to either Tibet or the great Monasteries of Drepung, Ganden and Sera in South India, which the class makes as a group in the second year of study. Course fees do not cover accommodations or food while living in Dharamsala, nor do they cover travel costs during break times.

LRZTP is not an accredited academic institution, therefore participants in the program are not eligible for student visas. Students may have to leave India periodically in order to renew their visas. Travel would be done during course breaks and at the expense of the student.

Once work in a center begins, the interpreter's living expenses as well as a monthly stipend will be provided by the center. Additionally, if the center is able, one receives partial repayment of their course fees. You can view the *FPMT Interpreter Agreement for LRZTP Graduates* here.

Further information, as it becomes available, will be posted at:  
[www.fpmt.org/Education/lrztp.asp](http://www.fpmt.org/Education/lrztp.asp).

Best wishes  
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