

Ph.D. Program Guidelines

Department of Biology



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Ph.D. Program in Biology

The Department of Biology at Ashoka University offers a full-time program leading to a Ph.D. degree in biology. The Ph.D. program values basic and interdisciplinary research and emphasizes on developing sound scientific temperament through rigorous coursework, logical reasoning, and effective oral and written communication skills.

Currently, the following broad thematic areas spanning the range of complexity in biology characterize the research in the department:

- 1. Biophysics and Biochemistry**
- 2. Cell and Developmental Biology**
- 3. Computational and Mathematical Biology**
- 4. Behaviour, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology**
- 5. Immunology and Disease Biology**
- 6. Biomedical Sciences including Digital Health**

The program is currently administered by the departmental Ph.D. Program Committee (PPC) under the guidance of the Head of the Department (HoD).

Admission to the Ph.D. program

Admission to the program is scheduled at the beginning of the Monsoon Semester (Mid-August) and/or Spring Semester (Mid-January). Details regarding Ph.D. opportunities with application deadlines are advertised in prominent web spaces (such as the Ashoka website, India Bioscience, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.) and leading newspapers. Additionally, flyers are distributed to all major institutions throughout the country. The number of Ph.D. students admitted varies from year to year and depends on the available positions in the department and also the merit of candidates. The website will have details about the seats available, different subject areas, criteria for selection, and the procedure for admission.

Eligibility

Students from any basic or applied sciences discipline, including biology, chemistry, physics, computer science, mathematics, medicine or engineering with any of the following degrees

- B.Eng./B.Tech./M.B.B.S./B.VSc./B.Pharm./B.S. or other recognized 4-year degrees in natural or applied sciences with 75 percentile or more,

OR

- M.Sc./M.Tech./M.Eng. degree with 55 percentile or more,

are eligible to apply for the Ph.D. program.

For students who are foreign nationals or have degrees from foreign educational institutions, these degrees have to be accredited by an assessment and accreditation agency that is approved, recognized, or authorized by an authority such as “The Association of Indian Universities” (<https://www.aiu.ac.in/evaluation.php>).

Application

Only complete applications submitted via the online Ph.D. application portal before the deadline are considered. Applicants are expected to provide the following documents as part of their application

1. A short write-up (maximum two pages) of research interests that briefly encapsulates academic background, research training, motivation to carry out the Ph.D. program at Ashoka, and a brief description of a research topic in biological sciences that you consider a major unsolved problem along with future career goal/s. The write-up should be written in your own language, and if found to be plagiarized, the application may not be accepted. *The Department will provide guidelines for writing an appropriate write-up.*
2. Current CV
3. Contact address and phone number of the two references writing recommendation letters
4. Two letters of recommendation from the references are to be emailed directly to phd.biology@ashoka.edu.in in .pdf or .doc formats. Files should be named as - ‘Recommendation_<candidate’s name>’.

Selection Procedure

The selection to the Ph.D. program in the Department of Biology is primarily based on

1. Qualification in the listed national-level examinations. JGEEBILS/ INSPIRE/ BINC/ CSIR-UGC/ ICMR/ JEST / GATE / DBT JRF
2. Performance in the personal interview(s).

The selection process has three stages

Stage-1: Completed and eligible applications are reviewed by a faculty panel and shortlisted for a first round online interview.

Stage-2: The online interview will be scheduled by the department faculty panel tentatively in May and/or November. Exact dates will be communicated to the selected candidates

Stage-3: Applicants who pass the online interview will be short-listed for the final round of in-person interviews in June/December. Candidates are

encouraged to interact with PIs during the on-campus round of interviews.

Once the evaluation is completed, the HoD will forward the list of selected candidates (and those waitlisted) to the Ph.D. program office, and those selected for Research Assistantship (RA-ship) to the Dean (Research) for final approval.

1. The offer letters will be dispatched by the Office of the Dean (Research), with a copy to the coordinator (Biology Ph.D. Program).
2. The entire admissions process (including the dispatch of letters of admission) is to be completed before 1st July/Mid December. The academic session for Ph.D. students will begin in the **2nd week of August/2nd week of January**.
3. The documents needed for the admission process, the timeline, and the fees to be paid will be conveyed to the selected students by the University.
4. All correspondence related to Ph.D. admissions will be routed only through the following email address: phd.biology@ashoka.edu.in (Biology Ph.D. Program).

Relaxation for certain categories of applicants

In accordance with UGC policy, a concession of 5% in aggregate marks—reducing the requirement from 55% to 50%—or a corresponding grade adjustment, is applicable for applicants from SC/ST/OBC (non-creamy layer), Differently-Abled, and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), alongside other specified groups as determined by the official UGC guidelines. The department will follow an affirmative action policy where encouraging students from diverse backgrounds will be encouraged to apply for the Ph.D. program and selected if found at par with others.

During the Ph.D. program

From Admission to Candidacy (1st and 2nd Year)

Orientation

The incoming cohort of Ph.D. students will undergo a half-day departmental orientation. During this orientation session,

1. The students will be apprised of the Ph.D. program, various timelines, course requirements, and laboratory policies.
2. Departmental orientation session will be organized at the beginning of the semester

Appointment of Supervisor

Thereafter, the students will be encouraged to interact with as many faculty members from the recruiting PI pool as they deem necessary to decide on a Ph.D. supervisor. Each student has to go through three lab rotations (two weeks for each rotation) before

finalizing their supervisor. An interested student should check with the faculty about this requirement. The department shall establish criteria for determining eligibility for primary supervision. A maximum of two faculty members may co-supervise a student, one of whom should be from or affiliated to the Department of Biology. Individuals holding non-formal academic appointments, including adjunct or visiting faculty and faculty fellows, may only serve as co-supervisors for doctoral candidates. The student will formally e-mail the Ph.D. program coordinator their first three choices in order of preference for faculty supervisor before the start of the midterm break.

The coordinator (Biological Sciences Ph.D. Program) will assign each student a faculty supervisor in consultation with the faculty committee of the department.

If two or more students have the same faculty as their choice, then it would be up to the faculty to pick student(s) depending on the positions available in the lab.

Change of Supervisor

Change of the supervisor request by students will only be considered only in exceptional cases (within the first two semesters).

Guidelines for transfer of registered Ph.D. students among faculty members

Case 1: When both the current and future supervisors have given their consent to the transfer.

The department will approve the transfer provided the synopsis has not been approved (i.e. prior to the oral qualifying exam). The total time for submission of the thesis will remain 5 years from the date of joining the program. A faculty member is allowed to accept the student as long as they have two or fewer students with Ashoka-funded fellowships.

Case 2: When the current supervisor is not willing to give consent.

HOD will have a discussion with the faculty and student and will try to find a solution through discussion. If there is a need, HOD may consult other faculty members and/or Ph.D. coordinators also.

Case 3: When the current supervisor has given consent for transfer but none of the eligible faculty have agreed to supervise the student.

It is the responsibility of the student to find an alternate supervisor. In case none of the faculty in the Biology, EVS, or Psychology departments are willing to supervise the student's Ph.D., the concerned student may have to leave the program.

Case 4: When a supervisor wants a student to transfer.

It will be investigated by HoD and if there is a need, a committee constituted by HoD will look into the issue.

If the concerned supervisor has raised the issue of lack of motivation/insufficient effort/absence from work without prior permission/overall performance below that expected from an Ashoka student and the report finds the allegation to be partially true, it will be the responsibility of the student to find a supervisor. In case none of the faculty in the Biology, EVS or Psychology departments are willing to supervise the student's PhD, the concerned student may have to leave the program. In exceptional cases where the student is not at fault, the department in its capacity will assist in the search for an alternate supervisor.

Case 5: A student has raised serious allegations against the supervisor while requesting for transfer.

HOD will set up a committee of at least three faculty members who will investigate the allegations. One of the members will be from either the chemistry or physics departments. If the committee finds substantial truth in the allegations the report will be discussed with the Dean (Research) and or Dean (Faculty) for further action. If the committee does not find any

substantive truth in the allegations, HOD will discuss the future course with the Ph.D. committee and the recommendations placed before the faculty.

For cases 4 and 5, the concerned faculty or student must submit a detailed note with evidence to support their allegations. If prima facie the allegations are found to be correct then HOD will forward the reports to Dean (Research) and Vice-Chancellor for suitable action. In case allegations are not supported by facts and are found to be fictitious, suitable action will be taken against the student or the faculty in consultation with the Dean (Research).

For cases 1-3, as far as possible the transfer process should be completed within 2 weeks after submission of an application if an alternate faculty agrees to supervise the student. If the student is not able to find another supervisor within 4 weeks he/she may have to leave the Ph.D. program.

Transfer of registered Ph.D. students when a faculty resigns from Ashoka University

In cases where the student has not yet presented their synopsis: It will be the responsibility of the departing faculty to help place the registered students in consultation with the PPC with other faculty. The department may extend its timeline in view of this situation. The department does not encourage remote guidance and supervision. The departing faculty may still continue to be a member of the SRC or be a co-supervisor if agreed by the new supervisor.

In the case where the synopsis has been accepted: The faculty either finds another faculty to supervise or offers to host the student in the new Institute. All Ashoka rules will apply to the governance of the Ph.D. requirement. If the student is getting an Ashoka fellowship, it may be continued after getting due permission from the Dean (research).

Formation of the Student Research Committee (SRC)

The students are advised to form a Departmental Review Committee (DRC) at the end of first semester. The DRC will consist of a minimum one faculty member from the department in consultation with the supervisor. The role of DRC is to advise and track the progress of the doctoral research project from the beginning of the program. By the end of the third semester a Student Research Committee (SRC) will be appointed by the departmental committee for each student for the rest of the PhD tenure. The DRC can be converted into an official Student Research Committee (SRC) after inclusion of at least one external member (preferably an associate professor/equivalent rank).

The SRC for each individual student will be chaired by the student's supervisor. The number of internal and external experts can be more than one depending on the topic and the nature of the problem. Assigned supervisors should propose 3 or 4 names of external (outside of Ashoka University) experts and 2-3 names of Ashoka Faculty (within and outside the department) to HoD who will then constitute the committee in consultation with the supervisor. Invitation letters to all the members will be mailed from the HoD account. A draft letter will be created for this purpose and the departmental manager will help in this process.

Function of SRC

The SRC functions to assist supervisors in providing guidance and advice on students' research, by complementing the expertise of supervisor/s. The functions of SRC are:

- i. To review the research proposal and finalize the topic of research.
- ii. To guide the Ph.D. scholar in developing the study design and methodology of research and identify the course(s) that he/she may have to do.
- iii. To periodically review and assist in the progress of the research work of the Ph.D. scholar.
- iv. To help overcome constraints, bottlenecks, and other issues affecting progress
- v. To review the complete work and give consent for writing and submission of thesis

Each semester, a Ph.D. scholar will make a presentation and submit a brief report on the progress of his/her work for evaluation and further guidance. The SRC will submit its recommendations along with a copy of the Ph.D. scholar's progress report to the RDO with a copy to HOD and the student.

In case the progress of the Ph.D. scholar is unsatisfactory, the SRC will record the reasons for the same and suggest corrective measures. If the Ph.D. scholar fails to implement these corrective measures, the Research Advisory Committee may recommend, with specific reasons, the cancellation of the registration of the Ph.D. scholar from the Ph.D. program.

Duration of the Ph.D. program

The Ph.D. program will be for a minimum duration of three (3) years, including coursework, and a maximum duration of six (6) years from the date of admission to the Ph.D. program.

In exceptional circumstances, Dean (Research)/VC may give permission to deregister from the program and can reregister 3 months before submission of the thesis. However, the total period from admission to final submission should not exceed more than 8 years. For a select category of students including those with a disability, there may be further relaxation. However, the total time should not exceed 10 years.

Coursework

Graduate courses offered by the department are listed below*.

1. BIO-6002 Research Methodology (Mandatory)
2. BIO-6014 Graduate Seminar Series in Biological Sciences
3. BIO-6020 Ecology
4. BIO-6223 Advanced Molecular Biology
5. BIO-6443 Immunology
6. BIO-6433 Developmental Biology
7. BIO-6423 Physiology

8. BIO-6501 Biostatistics & Bioinformatics
9. BIO-6100-1 Introduction to Computing in Biology
10. BIO-6012-1 Human genetic disorders: from rare disease to cancer
11. BIO-6003-1 Fundamentals of Molecular Ecology
12. BIO-6457-1 Microbiome and Health
13. BIO-6006-1 Understanding Structure and Function
14. BIO-6455-1 Synthetic Biology
15. BIO-6300-1 Chemical Basis of Life
16. BIO-6431-1 Climate Change and Biotic Evolution
17. BIO-6120-1 Genomics and Proteomics
18. BIO-6455-1 Synthetic Biology

(* New courses may be added that are not included in this list. Some of the courses may not be offered every year. Please contact the relevant faculty for updated information).

Students with an MTech degree are required to complete at least 8 credits of 6000-level coursework (2-3 courses) within 18 months from the date of admission.

Students with an M.Sc./M.A./M.Com. must complete at least 16 credits (3 four credit courses and one ISM equivalent to four credits with Principal Investigator whose laboratory they are joining) of 6000 level coursework within 18 months from the date of admission.

Students with four year Bachelor's degree as per NEP program must complete at least 20 credits (4 four credit courses and one ISM equivalent to four credits with Principal Investigator whose laboratory they are joining) of 6000 level coursework within 18 months from the date of admission.

Students may take graduate courses (level 6000) within or outside of the department that would provide the necessary breadth and depth of knowledge to undertake the proposed research in consultation with the supervisor. However, all students **must compulsorily** take the course on Research Methodology including publication ethics.

No credit transfer is allowed for any workshops or conferences. Students are encouraged to participate in national and international conferences and workshops. However, students must take prior permission from the supervisor to apply for any conferences or workshops.

The Department of Biology requires all students to demonstrate good academic standing and maintain a minimum grade of 7.5/10 (3.0 /4.0) at the end of their coursework.

Graduate Assistantship

All Ph.D. students are expected to work for about 8 hours/week assisting with teaching courses. Assistance in teaching will include (among others) grading assignments,

quizzes, or lab reports, data collection and/or analysis, classroom teaching, and maintenance of LMS. Students may contact individual faculty members for TA-ship opportunities and intimate the PPC of their choice. As far as possible students should resist assisting their supervisors in running courses. All GAs should be approved by the PPC. Ph.D. students are required to assist as a Graduate Assistant for two courses (theory and lab). Out of the two mandatory GAs, the students should complete one assistantship prior to taking the oral qualifying examination. In case, if it is not possible to complete the one GA before OQE, students should make a request to HOD through PPC with valid reasons. Students may have the opportunity to do additional teaching or participate in a foundation course by assisting the course TF if they wish to gain more teaching experience under the guidance of the course coordinators, **with approval from the supervisor.**

Formal Admission to Ph.D. Candidate Status

A student will be formally admitted to the Ph.D. candidature status upon fulfilling the following criteria.

- 1. Satisfied all course requirements**
- 2. Completed mandatory GA/TA-ship hours**
- 3. Cleared Oral Qualifying Examination (OQE)**

The oral examination is intended to test specific knowledge about the research field and the dissertation project, including some preliminary studies, that the student intends to embark upon. The SRC recommendation of OQE performance is an absolute necessity to continue in the PhD program. Prospective students should be confirmed and registered for the Ph.D. program **no later than 2 years** after joining unless there are extenuating circumstances for which specific permission has to be obtained. The paper presentation is to promote and assess in depth and breadth of knowledge of the Ph.D. students and can be done any time before OQE.

The Ph.D. qualifying examination will consist of two components,

- a) A thesis proposal report, which clearly provides comprehensive background literature, aim/s of the dissertation research, planned methodologies, and preliminary data to indicate the feasibility of the proposed research and future directions to be taken. The report is to be submitted to the SRC at least 2-weeks prior to the oral qualifying examination.
- b) The student should present and defend their thesis research proposal before the SRC to qualify for candidacy. This oral defence is open to the Ashoka community, while the audience will be excused for closed-door discussions between the student and the SRC.

The SRC will decide if the student has cleared the oral examination and can transfer to the Ph.D. program. If the SRC unanimously feels that the student has failed the examination, the student may not be recommended for Ph.D. candidature. SRC will focus less on the amount of data and more on the student's learning and understanding of the area. However, using preliminary data, the student has to demonstrate their grasp of the hands-on skills for different methodologies to be used during their Ph.D.

In the event that the SRC feels that the student needs to demonstrate satisfactory performance in the qualifying examination and/or the coursework, the SRC will communicate the deficiencies to the student and provide recommendations. These may include taking additional courses and/or revising research questions and reappearing for the qualifying examination within stipulated timeline (maximum six months from the first OQE). In such a scenario, the student can be given a 'conditional pass'. The students must comply with these recommendations within the stipulated time, failing which the candidature will be terminated.

After confirmation, a student should spend a minimum of 2 years before submission. This is to allow the student to generate sufficient data for a worthy thesis.

Detailed records of the students (SRC report, record of oral presentations) will be kept by the supervisors and it will be their responsibility to ensure compliance with rules and regulations. All the information will be shared with RDO or the Ph.D. Program Office.

3rd Year and Beyond

SRC Review

Upon clearing their qualifying examination, the Ph.D. student must organize SRC meetings every semester as mentioned above. Generally, the meeting can be held online. However, organizing one physical meeting during the later stages of the work is encouraged. Each student who has been confirmed as a Ph.D. candidate must present their work once a year in the department. SRC approval is necessary for writing up the thesis about three months but not later than four months before submission.

Pre-submission seminar

A Ph.D. student has to present their thesis work in an open seminar in the presence of the SRC about 3 months prior to submission of the thesis. Recommendation of the SRC is necessary before a candidate is allowed to submit.

Submission of Dissertation

Guidelines for the preparation of the thesis Design

- **Document.** A4 size paper; 2.5 cm (1.0”) margins on all four sides; 1.25 spacing between lines and single spacing for references
- **Font.** Times New Roman or Arial; 12-point font size for main text and 10 points for footnotes.
- **Figures, Tables, Photographs.** Graphs, images, and tables should be inserted in the text close to where they have been referred to. Videos, if present, should have hyperlinks at the relevant place.
- **Pagination.** Page numbers are to be added for all the sections (including bibliographies, and appendices). The title, certificate, declaration, table of contents, and acknowledgments should be numbered in lowercase Roman letters. The title page will be considered as page (i) but the number is not printed.
- **Title page.** The title page should follow the format provided
- **Thesis abstract or summary.** The abstract should not exceed 400 words

- **Table of contents.** The table of contents should list all material that follows it. Chapter titles, sections, figures, tables, etc must be listed.
- **Appendices.** Supplementary text, figures, or tables which are not critical for the chapters can be included as an appendix and listed in the table of contents.
- **References.** Any of the standard style manuals may be used in formatting references to works cited in the thesis.
- **Thesis length.** The thesis length should preferably be restricted to 200 pages (from the Abstract to the Discussion sections) without tables and figures.

Thesis structure

The Ph.D. thesis can be structured using one of the following formats: format A or format B, whichever suits your work.

Format A

Here, individual chapters describing the work have their own introduction, methods, results, and discussion sections. The thesis should comprise of the following in the order given below:

1. Title page
2. Dedicated to (optional)
3. Certificate (refer to annexures)
4. Declaration (refer to annexures)
5. Acknowledgments
6. Copyright page (optional)
7. Table of Contents (This will have chapters and page numbers)
8. List of tables, figures, illustrations etc
9. List of abbreviations
10. Abstract or Summary
11. List of publications and contributions to authorship following the CRediT format (<https://casrai.org/credit/>).
12. Chapter 1- Introduction (including objectives of the thesis)
13. Individual Chapters with subsections titled Rationale, Materials and Methods, Results and Discussion. The rationale section should justify the planning, approach, and execution covered in each chapter.
14. Appendices
15. References
16. Copies of published papers (optional)
17. Conference abstracts in society journals (optional)

Format B

This is a traditional structure of the thesis with sections in the following order

1. Title page
2. Dedicated to (optional)
3. Certificate (refer to annexures)
4. Declaration (refer to annexures)
5. Acknowledgments
6. Copyright page (optional)

7. Table of Contents (This will have chapters and page numbers)
8. List of tables, figures, illustrations etc
9. List of abbreviations
10. Abstract or Summary
11. List of publications and contributions to authorship following the CRediT format (<https://casrai.org/credit/>).
12. Chapter 1 Introduction which justifies the planning, approach, and execution of the work and includes objectives of the thesis.
13. Chapter 2 Materials and Methods
14. Chapter 3 Results 15. Chapter 4 Discussion.
16. Appendices
17. References
18. Copies of published papers (optional)
19. Conference abstracts in society journals (optional)

Ph.D. Tenure and Extension

The thesis should be submitted within 5 years from the time of admission or 10 semesters. In case a student is not able to submit within the stipulated time, he/she can apply for an extension (maximum one year) at least six months before the due date to the supervisor. The application along with the recommendation of the SRC should be submitted to the HOD. HOD may recommend the extension and forward the application along with the recommendations to the Dean (Research) for approval. The University is not required to provide fellowship during the extension period. In some circumstances, the student may have to deregister from the program as outlined above. In exceptional circumstances, the student may be allowed to deregister from the program. The student may register when the work is complete and in a position to submit the thesis as recommended by SRC. The total duration from joining to submission should not exceed 8 years.

Data and text sharing M.Sc./ASP/Ph.D.

A thesis is the embodiment of work that is published as well as unpublished. A large amount of data generated during standardization and quality (unpublished) should be included in the thesis. Publications involve multiple authors, including the supervisors who play an important role in writing manuscripts. Therefore, the thesis should be written completely by the student. The supervisor here has an advisory role.

Figures from one thesis can be reproduced into another one provided a proper acknowledgment has been given. Under no circumstances there should be textual overlap between any two theses (for example, ASP and Ph.D.). The maximum allowable overall is about 15%.

Submission of thesis for evaluation

Research Scholars shall submit a soft copy to Dean (Research). Students will be required to subject the draft dissertation to a check for plagiarism using standard software and will be responsible for any plagiarism found after submission. A set of declarations in a defined format is necessary and must accompany the draft thesis. The formats are attached as Annexures.

Thesis Examination and Defense

The thesis will be examined by two external examiners out of six names of potential examiners suggested by SRC and approved by HoD. Such examiner(s) should be academics with a good record of scholarly publications in the field and should hold a position equivalent of at least an associate professor. Wherever possible, one of the external examiners should be chosen from outside India. The viva-voce board shall consist of the Research Supervisor and at least one of the two external examiners and may be conducted online. The selection of the examiners will be done by the Dean (Research). The faculty supervisor(s) will also examine the thesis as examiner(s).

Each external examiner, supervisor, and co-supervisor will independently recommend one of:

1. "The dissertation is accepted without any revision",
2. "The dissertation is accepted subject to suggested changes/clarifications being incorporated in the dissertation and presented at the time of the *viva voce* examination",
3. "The dissertation is revised and submitted for re-examination", or
4. "The dissertation is rejected outright".

Once each external examiner and Faculty supervisor recommends either 1) or 2), the department (HOD) will formally conduct a *viva voce* examination in the presence of at least one, but preferably both, external examiners in the presence of SRC. The examination will be open to all faculty members and students from Ashoka University. The student will submit the modified thesis if the examiners recommend 3). The same examiners have to re-examine the modified thesis and recommend either 1) or 2). Following the acceptance of the thesis, the students will present the thesis in an open defense.

After the *viva voce*, a copy of the final modified dissertation will be deposited with the INFLIBNET and Ashoka University Library. A hard copy of the final accepted thesis will also be deposited with the Department.

Publication/ Patent Requirements

The student, before submitting the thesis, should have submitted a patent or published at least ONE first-author manuscript in a peer-reviewed indexed journal based on the data generated. For the pre-submission presentation, a submitted (under review) manuscript based on the work done by the student may be acceptable. Review articles will not be considered for fulfilling the requirement.

Timelines

Year – 1

- Admission
- Compulsory coursework

- TA-ship

Year – 2

- Complete coursework requirement
- Complete TA-ship requirement
- Form Student Research Committee (SRC)
- Oral Qualifying Examination (OQE)
- Paper presentation
- Confirmation of Ph.D. Candidature

Year – 3 till Year-5

- Carry out Dissertation Research
- Annual Work Seminar
- SRC review meeting(s)
- Communicate your research as a manuscript/patent
- Dissertation submission

Year – 6

- If necessary, submission of the thesis

Students must submit their final dissertation within five years of the date of admission to the Ph.D. Programme. Based on need or justification, an extension of up to 1 year may be recommended by the SRC, and granted by the Dean (Research).

Stipend

Students funded by Ashoka University

- The monthly stipend paid to all Ph.D. students selected as TAs funded by Ashoka University will be Rs. 50,000+HRA (10000) per month and will be for a maximum period of 5 years. The Dean (Research) may allow an extension of the stipend beyond 5 years after the recommendation of the supervisor and HoD.

The Ph.D. Scholars are eligible for Senior Research Fellowship (SRF) upon completing their candidacy. The monthly stipend for an SRF is Rs 55,000+HRA (10000) per month.

- A contingency grant of Rs. 20,000 per annum will be made available to each Ph.D. student.
- The quantum of the stipend paid to TAs will be reviewed periodically.

Students funded through external fellowships

- The monthly stipend and annual contingency grant given to PhD students who receive a scholarship from CSIR, UGC or other agencies will be decided based on terms covering the scholarship itself.
- An annual contingency of Rs 20,000, will be made available to each PhD student
- Whenever there is a delay in receiving funds from the funding agencies, Ashoka University will pay in advance.
- The university will offer subsidized dining in the University dining hall.

Monthly release of fellowships

The fellowship will be released every month after receiving a satisfactory performance certificate from the supervisors.

Leave and absence

Leave for students availing of a fellowship from an outside agency will be governed by the policy adopted by the agency.

For Ashoka fellowship holders the following rules will be followed.

Leave with a stipend not exceeding 30 days for each completed year of tenure may be allowed by the supervisor and approved by the Ph.D.-Coordinator. The leave will be treated as part of the Fellow's tenure. The leave due can be carried over to the next year, however, not more than 90 days can be accumulated at any time during the tenure. Of this, not more than 30 days can be availed in a calendar year with a stipend, and beyond that, any leave will be treated as "Leave Without Stipend".

Attendance of conferences/meetings and fieldwork will be treated as on duty. However, the students have to get prior permission from the supervisor and Ph.D. coordinator.

Women students will be granted maternity leave for up to 180 days after getting prior sanction from the supervisor and Ph.D. coordinator. It is expected that the Fellow will make up for the research work during the remaining tenure. Male students are entitled to paternity leave of up to 30 days. Submission of relevant documentary proof is necessary for availing of this leave.

Fees

Students funded by Ashoka University

- Tuition fee: Rs. 12,500 per semester.
- Dissertation assessment fee: Rs. 15,000.
- The quantum of fees paid by Ph.D. students will be reviewed from time to time.

Students funded through external fellowships

- University waives the semester fees.
- Dissertation assessment fee: Rs. 15,000.

- The quantum of fees paid by PhD students will be reviewed from time to time.

Financial support to attend International Conferences

Ashoka University offers financial assistance to all Ph.D. scholars for presenting their research ideas/findings at reputed international conferences. This facility can be availed multiple times but with a maximum total of Rs 2,00,000/- during the entire Ph.D. period. All requests should be approved by the HOD.

Housing and Medical Insurance

- Housing will be provided to Ph.D. students based on availability. The University will arrange accommodation nearby and provide transport to the campus.
- Ashoka University facilitates medical insurance (as per university policy)