



THE SCHOLARSHIPS REPORT



2026

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All data in this report is as of June 2026

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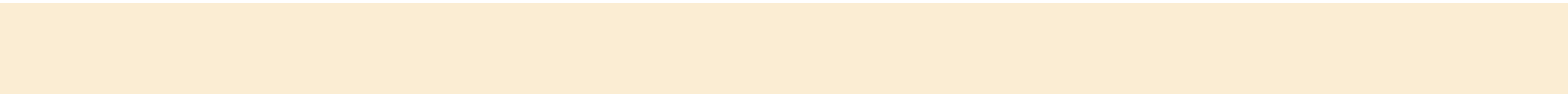
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**WHY
ACCESS**

MATTERS

01

Talent is evenly distributed. Opportunity is not

In our country, higher education has always been looked at as one of the key drivers of social mobility. It expands opportunities and enables societies with the knowledge needed to solve complex problems. Yet, across the country, access to education, especially high quality education is increasingly shaped by something out of our control – affordability. The high cost of education puts considerable pressure on already outstretched budgets of families.

This is where scholarships come in. Scholarships at Ashoka reduce financial barriers and ensure that talent and potential are the deciding factors for admissions. It makes university spaces uniquely attractive by bringing students from diverse regions and lived experiences. It enables first-generation learners to focus fully on their education, while ensuring they have access to the support they need. Because when opportunity is given to those who deserve it, it transforms families, communities and eventually, society itself.

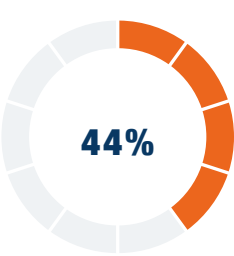




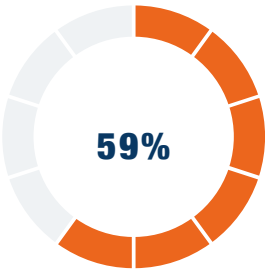
- Number of undergraduate (UG) students on campus in AY 25-26: **2,859**
- Number of Young India Fellows on campus in AY 25-26: **97**

KEY METRICS

Percentage of students on scholarship in Academic Year (AY) 2025-26



Percentage of women on scholarship in AY 2025-26



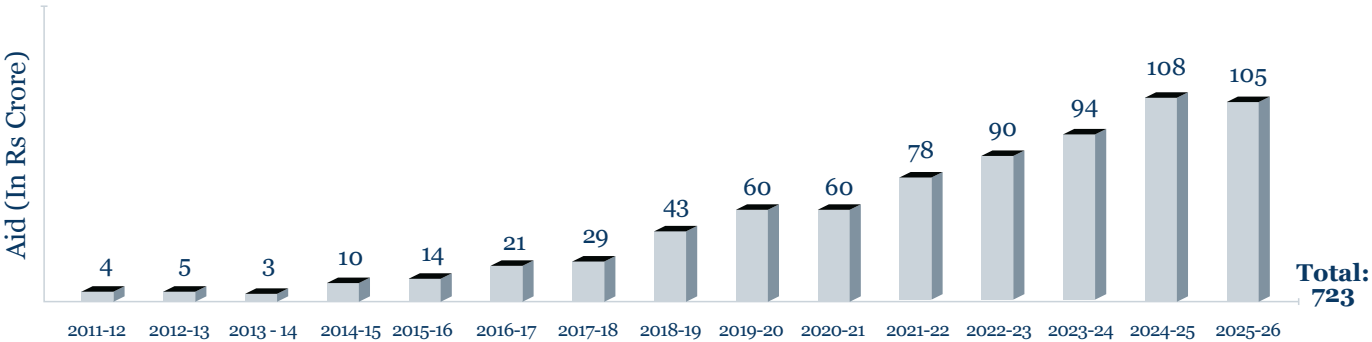
Total disbursed scholarship amount in AY 2025-26

Rs105 cr
(USD 11 million)

Total scholarships have grown by 75% over five years. The university has disbursed a cumulative

Rs 723 crore (USD 76 million) in aid since inception, supporting 5,463 students across all years.

GROWTH IN SCHOLARSHIPS SINCE INCEPTION



Academic Year
*Does not include PhD scholars

**All data as of June 2026

**THE
DOORS**

**WE
OPEN**

02

Using AI to bridge healthcare gaps

Vaibhav Shokeen (UG 2026) is using computer vision technology to tackle schistosomiasis in vulnerable communities

Vaibhav is a 'frugal innovator'. After being introduced to the topic of schistosomiasis through an online lecture at Stanford, he came up with SchistoDx – a computer vision-based software solution that helps diagnose the disease at a fraction of the cost.

Schistosomiasis is a parasitic disease that affects over 200 million people. Armed with a grant of \$10,000 from the Experiment Foundation, Vaibhav travelled to Nigeria in 2025 and worked within the community of impacted individuals.

"I've been fascinated by making technologies for rural areas and communities, because I think they are the ones who can benefit the most using technologies, but they have the least access to it," says Vaibhav.

At Ashoka, he not only gets to work with mentors from his domain but also expand his worldview through interactions with people doing completely different things. Currently, he is applying for grants and trying to scale the SchistoDX prototype.

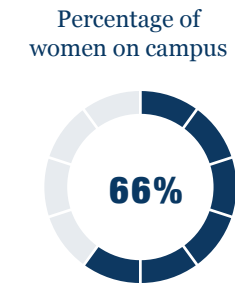


**"EVERY TIME YOU
REDUCE THE COST
OF SOMETHING,
ITS ACCESSIBILITY
GROWS
EXPONENTIALLY."**



Total students on
campus

3,323



Total UG intake in AY
2025-26

762

Out of these 762
learners

63

are first generation
college goers

Student support services

ACADEMIC BRIDGE PROGRAMME (ABP)

A specially curated course for select students, designed to bridge the gap between high school education and Ashoka's academic rigour. Running since 2018 as a three-week immersive programme, it has supported over 40 students in AY 25-26.

OFFICE OF LEARNING SUPPORT (OLS)

OLS assists students with visible and invisible disabilities. Constantly drawing on new knowledge and best practices in the field of inclusion, it has helped nearly 400 students on campus this year.

ASHOKA CENTRE FOR WELL-BEING (ACWB)

The Ashoka Centre for Well-Being (ACWB) supports mental health of students, faculty and staff through preventive, clinical, and wellness-focused initiatives, offering professional guidance and one-on-one consultations throughout their academic journey at Ashoka.

How scholarships work at Ashoka



ADMISSIONS TO ASHOKA

Upon receiving an offer of admission, students become eligible to apply for scholarships.

SCHOLARSHIP FORM OPENS

Admitted students share family income and financial details through a scholarship form.



NEED ASSESSMENT & COMMITTEE REVIEW

The scholarships team reviews submitted documentation. Each case is reviewed by the scholarships committee before a decision is made.

SCHOLARSHIP DECISIONS SHARED

Students are informed of their scholarship amount. A reconsideration window is available if circumstances warrant a review for 15–20 days from form submission.



*Three months from application to final scholarship decision





This year, Ashoka announced 500

additional merit and need-based scholarships for

students entering the Undergraduate Class of 2026.

What scholarships cover

TUITION

Full or partial coverage of academic fees for the duration of the programme.

BEYOND TUITION

Scholarships are also designed to cover the complete cost of a student's life on campus — not just fees.



RESIDENCE

On-campus housing for scholarship recipients.



MEALS

Dining plan included for students on full aid.



MEDICAL ALLOWANCE

Healthcare support for students who need it.



LAPTOP

Provided to students without access to one.



STATIONERY ALLOWANCE

Academic supplies covered so cost is never a barrier to learning.



STIPEND

Monthly allowance for personal expenses, where applicable.

How opportunity multiplies

Saraswathi Gantapaka's (UG fourth year) journey reflects the transformative power of education and financial aid

A first generation college-goer, Saraswathi had decided early in her life that she did not want to increase the financial burden on her family. After earning a highly competitive scholarship to the Aga Khan Academy in Hyderabad, she was able to access an education that fundamentally changed the trajectory of her life. In 2023, she came to Ashoka with the plan of pursuing a major in Computer Science.

The University, according to her, did not just give her the pathway to a good education but an opportunity to discover who she would

become. Saraswathi soon started dabbling in graphic design and plans to join the creative industry after her graduation. And in the long run, she dreams of setting up a programme to support students from underprivileged backgrounds, especially in creative fields like art and animation.

“IF WE CAN CHANGE THE MINDSET OF PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES AROUND GIRLS’ EDUCATION – IT COULD COMPLETELY TRANSFORM LIVES.”



**THE
DREAMS**

**WE
ENABLE**

03

One door, then another

A scholarship at Ashoka gave Lali Jat (YIF 2026) her first year without fear

Growing up in a farming family where income rarely stretched to cover basic needs, Lali learned early that education was something you fought for, rung by rung. Scholarships were the only ladder she had – carrying her through school, through Lady Shri Ram College where she studied Political Science, and eventually to the Young India Fellowship at Ashoka University. But even after getting in, uncertainty lingered. “It was very clear to me,” she says, “that if I didn’t get a full scholarship, it simply wouldn’t be possible.”

She applied, and got it. What followed was a liberation she hadn’t anticipated. “The scholarship made me so mentally free that I had no anxiety about managing the year. I could engage with everything – classes, people, experiences – without a single thought of pressure.”

She leaves Ashoka this summer for a reporting role with the Indian Express, hoping to ask the right questions and tell stories that matter.

“THE SCHOLARSHIP
MADE ME SO MENTALLY
FREE THAT I HAD
NO ANXIETY ABOUT
MANAGING THE YEAR.”

Many voices, one campus

Scholarships do more than expand access. They help create campuses enriched by students from diverse geographies, communities, and lived experiences.

In 2026, over 200 schools were added to our student outreach.

More than half of our applications come from tier 2 and tier 3 cities.

This year, Ashoka students came from 13 countries and 138 Indian towns and cities.



Our faculty, too, bring a wealth of perspectives shaped by different disciplines, experiences, and geographies from across India and around the world.

Total faculty: 277

Full-time faculty: 199

Male: 124

Female: 75

Visiting faculty: 78

Against odds, to Cambridge

Scholarship and resilience is carrying Surya A (YIF 2026) from uncertainty to a fully-funded Cambridge degree

Surya grew up in institutional care in Chennai, leaving the system at 18 with little certainty about what came next.

What followed was a patchwork of survival and persistence: teaching music and instruments to support himself through college, earning degrees in social work, and eventually working with the South India AIDS Action Programme on issues of urban displacement, child welfare, and multidimensional poverty.



Two years into fieldwork, he found himself pulled back towards academics. Public policy, he felt, could help him understand not just welfare systems, but the politics, economics, and technologies that shape them. That search brought him to the Young India Fellowship at Ashoka, where he was awarded the Chancellor's Merit scholarship.

"I don't think I could have afforded this degree without the scholarship," he says quietly. The support, he explains, extended beyond tuition, healthcare, stipend and meals.

He has recently received the Gates Cambridge scholarship to pursue Public Policy at the University of Cambridge.

"THIS IS THE KIND OF EXPOSURE THAT I WOULD HAVE WANTED WHEN I WAS A CHILD, AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I AM GETTING HERE."





**“THE SCHOLARSHIPS
I WON VALUED
CURIOSITY AND
POTENTIAL MORE THAN
JUST ACHIEVEMENTS.
THAT CHANGED
EVERYTHING FOR ME.”**

Cultivating Cool Equity

Scholarships gave VG Layasree (UG third year) a chance at Ashoka. Now she’s changing the future of marine conservation

Growing up in Bengaluru, Layasree knew the conventional wisdom: good grades lead to professional degrees and a successful career. But something shifted when she won a scholarship to study Marine Ecology and Sustainability at The Island School in the Bahamas. “That experience made me realise that learning could be far more expansive than I had imagined”, she says.

Studying abroad without a full scholarship was financially impossible for her. Coming from a single-parent household, every educational decision was shaped by economic reality.

She discovered Ashoka, gaining admission with a 100% tuition waiver – the single biggest deciding factor in her higher education pathway. Today, she majors in Biology while working extensively in Marine Ecology and Sustainability.

Her project, *Cool Equity*, tackles post-harvest seafood waste among small and marginal fishers through decentralised cold storage systems – reducing overfishing, preserving marine ecosystems, and improving livelihoods. In 2025, it won the Monaco Ocean Protection Challenge and a €2,000 grant.

**THE
LIVES**

**THAT
CHANGE**

04

From scholarship to sustainability research

A 100% tuition waiver enabled Lavanya Goswami's (UG 2025) interdisciplinary learning, shaping her journey toward sustainable development research

Growing up in Chandigarh, Lavanya had the ambition – but not the certainty. When she received the Jayant Rikhye Scholarship from HSBC, waiving 100% of her tuition at Ashoka University, that uncertainty lifted.

“The scholarship helped me use my time at Ashoka to experiment and grow without any financial burden,” she says. She interned at NITI Aayog, worked as a research assistant across leading institutions, and immersed herself fully in campus life.

Academically, Ashoka reshaped how she thinks. “I not only gained a thorough grounding in Economics but also learnt to apply it alongside other disciplines.” Today, Lavanya is pursuing an MSc in Economics at the London School of Economics, aiming to do a PhD and research in sustainable development and the green transition.

The interdisciplinary instinct now drives her belief that complex, real-world problems demand multidisciplinary solutions.



“HSBC’S SUPPORT LED ME TO ASHOKA – AND TO BECOMING A CHANGEMAKER.”



**SCHOLARSHIPS ENABLE
PARTICIPATION, NOT
JUST ENROLLMENT**

This year, 130+ students
received global higher
education admits, including

48 Oxbridge +Ivy
League offers

16 Full-ride scholarships
including Rhodes, Gates
Cambridge, Felix and
Erasmus Mundus

14 Doctoral offers from Oxford,
Brown, Pennsylvania,
amongst others

Ashoka University has partnerships
with prestigious universities across the
globe, with more than **70** international
partnerships spanning **21** countries
across five continents.



An engineer's journey towards policy

The HDFC scholarship opened doors that Sachindra Sahu (YIF 2019) could never have imagined at the age of 22

Sachindra is a chemical engineer with no business being in a room full of philosophers, lawyers, and policy professionals. Yet, that's exactly where the HDFC Scholarship placed him – at Ashoka University's Young India Fellowship. Looking back, he says, it was probably the best thing that ever happened to his career.

"The YIF gave me something I didn't know I needed: a year to wander across disciplines. Economics, Energy Policy, Cognitive Science, International Relations – I consumed all of it voraciously. Somewhere in that wandering, an introductory course on Energy Policy quietly rewired how I saw the world."

Soon after, he found himself consulting for the Finance Secretary of Andhra Pradesh, helping dismantle ineffective policies. That

experience opened every door that followed – a Master's in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School, infrastructure finance in South Africa, and projects spanning affordable housing in Kenya and green guarantee frameworks in India.

Today, he works in healthcare strategy consulting – a pivot he could never have imagined at 22. "A good liberal education doesn't just prepare you for one career. It teaches you how to think, which turns out to be useful everywhere", he says.

"ASHOKA GAVE ME SOMETHING I DIDN'T KNOW I NEEDED: A YEAR TO WANDER ACROSS DISCIPLINES."

How scholarships changed our family

“We’re Amlan’s parents. Both of us are from Odisha, which is also where Amlan completed his schooling before joining Ashoka. When our son received his admission offer, our first reaction was disbelief and excitement, quickly followed by worry. The initial scholarship of 75% waiver on tuition, while generous, left a gap our family could not bridge. We wrote to the admissions office, and what



happened next changed everything: they reconsidered, and offered him a full scholarship.

That single act of generosity altered the trajectory of our family’s life. Today, our son is a public policy professional with the Government of Odisha, and has just been admitted to Harvard’s MPA/ID programme, one of the most competitive



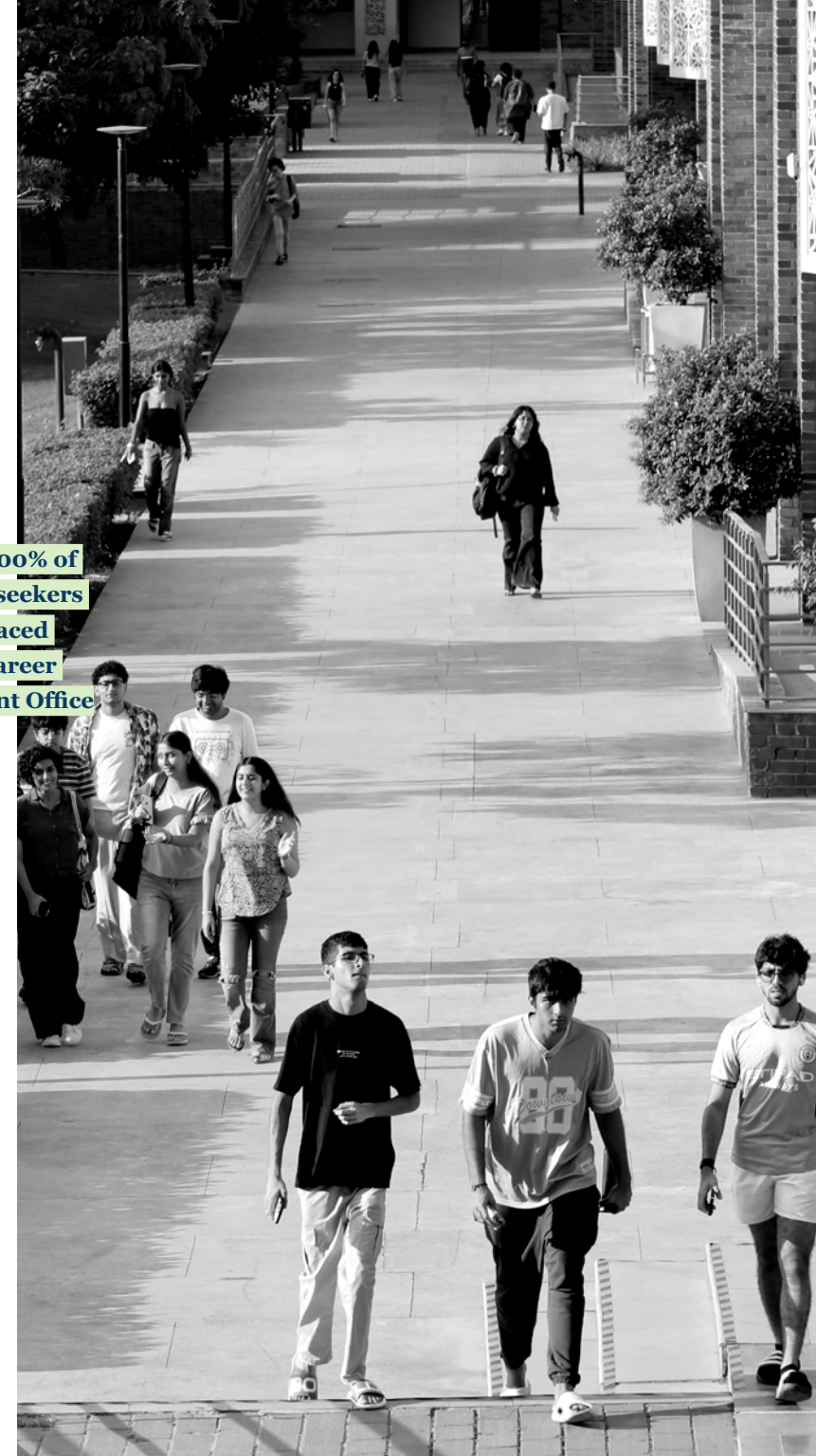
and prestigious policy courses in the world. We believe the foundation Ashoka built made both possible.

But the transformation went beyond career. The freedom of thought and critical thinking Ashoka instilled in him came home with him, it sat at our dinner table, and made us, as parents, question our own assumptions and biases in ways we never expected. That, perhaps, is Ashoka’s most profound gift: it did not just educate our son. It made our entire family think differently.

Ashoka’s students carry its values far beyond graduation, into government, into communities, and in time, back to the university itself through mentorship and contribution. We are living proof of what a single, far-sighted act of investment in a young person’s potential can become. We are, and will remain, deeply grateful.”

— *Avaya Kumar Samal and Mamata Rekha Jena, Parents of Amlan Bibhu Datta (UG 2021)*

In 2026, 100% of active job-seekers were placed by the Career Development Office.



**THE
PILLARS**

**OF
SUPPORT**

05

Why donors give to Ashoka

At Ashoka, scholarships are made possible by donors who believe that India's future depends on nurturing a generation of thoughtful leaders, innovators, and changemakers. At a time of rapid social, economic, and technological change, they recognise the importance of ensuring that talented young people – irrespective of their financial background – have access to an education that equips them to think critically, lead with empathy, and contribute meaningfully to society.

For many donors, giving to scholarships is an investment in people. They are drawn to Ashoka's commitment to excellence, inclusion, and the idea that education can create lasting change, not only for students and their families, but for society as a whole.

Together, these partnerships make it possible for more students to learn, grow, and lead with confidence and purpose.





Ashoka has 290+ founders and donors. Their continued support has enabled deserving students from low and mid-income families to pursue an exceptional higher education.

The University has received Rs 408 cr (USD 43.2 million) in financial aid commitments to date. This helps us offset the cost of students' tuition and living expenses, thus supporting a more diverse student body that is rooted in equity.



Building the India we want to see

“I have always believed that talent is abundant, but opportunity is not. A scholarship does not just open a door – it tells a young person that someone believes in them. That belief, more than anything else, is what changes the trajectory of a life. At UTI AMC, we are not just supporting education. We are investing in the idea that where you come from should never determine how far you can go.

India’s growth will be determined by our ability to include the best minds, regardless of background. Ashoka University represents the kind of institution that can shape thinking, build leaders, and challenge assumptions. Supporting access to it is a long-term investment in the kind of India we want to build.”

— **Vetri Subramaniam**
MD & CEO, UTI Mutual Fund

To date, UTI AMC has provided financial support to over
70 scholars at Ashoka University

More than an engineer

Aarush Anandh's (UG third year) journey into Mathematics, machine learning, and meaningful work

"I had always thought of STEM as engineering and had never thought of research till the 12th grade," says Aarush Anandh.

Aarush had always imagined STEM in the conventional fashion – Engineering from IIT and a technical career thereafter. This notion changed completely at Ashoka where he decided to study Mathematics and Computer Science in depth.

Coming from a single-parent household, he was aware that scholarships would play a defining role in making Ashoka accessible to him, enabling him to pursue opportunities that would otherwise have remained out of reach.

Today, Aarush is part of a student-led research collective working on machine learning, Mathematics, and graphics research. The group's work in constrained image synthesis has pushed him beyond classroom learning into hands-on experimentation, collaborative problem-solving, and primary research.

At Ashoka, Aarush has not only found academic direction, but also a sense of purpose. Whether mentoring students at the Lodha Genius Programme or building research projects with fellow undergraduates, he approaches every challenge with intensity and sincerity. His aspiration, ultimately, is not prestige for its own sake, but meaningful work. Quoting Karl Marx, he reflects, "There's no use of scientific invention if it doesn't affect the common person."



Note from the Chairperson

The transition from school to university marks the beginning of a fundamentally new phase of life. It is among the first major adult decisions a young person makes for themselves. They begin asking big questions: What do I want to study? What kind of work would I find interesting to do? Where would I like to see myself in the next 5 years? These are important questions, and they deserve a student's full attention to make an informed choice.

At Ashoka, we have always believed that when a student applies, a central consideration should be their passion for learning. Are they curious? Are they sincere in their pursuit of knowledge? Do they have the intention, confidence, and promise to flourish in a rigorous academic environment? These qualities tell us far more about a student's future than the circumstances that accompany their application. After all, a student does not choose where they are born, the resources available

at home, or the financial decisions made long before they had any say in them. Yet these realities often define educational choices in profound ways.

From the very beginning, Ashoka has sought to address this. We chose to place our faith in students and then work towards making that faith practical through scholarships, financial aid, and other forms of support. There is, admittedly, an innocence to this idea. It requires

us to imagine that talent, commitment, and potential deserve the opportunity to transcend circumstances that are limiting.

Over the years, we have seen what becomes possible when we act on this conviction. Scholarships often determine whether a student can choose Ashoka at all. They also contribute to the character of the university. Ours is a residential campus where students from

different regions of India, the subcontinent and beyond live and learn together. They bring different mother tongues, family histories, cultural habits, aspirations, and ways of seeing the world. The resulting exchange of experiences and perspectives becomes an education in itself.

The stories you read recognise and celebrate the possibilities that emerge from this kind of education that is realised in the everyday of campus life. They traced the journeys of students, the academic combinations they pursued, the research they undertook, and the career outcomes they shaped for themselves.

Putting together this report also revealed the paths we are yet to strengthen: of expanding full-ride scholarships, building a dedicated endowment for Ashoka's life, and reaching many more hundreds of talented students from untouched parts of India.

To our founders, donors and supporters of Ashoka, thank you for your encouragement, inspiration, and for walking this path with us. Miles to go before we sleep, after all.

— **Pramath Raj Sinha**
Chairperson, Board of Trustees,
Ashoka University



