

Six selected as Indian Rhodes Scholars for 2026

Cohort includes a Philosophy student from Mukhtasar, Punjab, a chemistry student from Kochi, Kerala, and an economist from Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh.

Bengaluru (9 November 2025) – Six Rhodes Scholars-Elect for India 2026 were selected over the weekend, marking the culmination of a rigorous national selection process. After a competitive application process and two rounds of preliminary interviews, shortlisted finalists were interviewed and six were chosen to receive the prestigious scholarships, which include the ‘Rhodes Scholarship for India in partnership with the Radhakrishnan-Rajan family’. The sixth scholarship has been made possible with the generous donation of Dr Mukund Rajan and Mrs Soumya Rajan.



They will be heading to the University of Oxford in October 2026 to join a cohort of more than a hundred Scholars from around the world to undertake fully funded post-graduate studies and become part of a strong community of people determined to make a positive difference in the world.

The Rhodes Scholarship is the world’s preeminent and oldest graduate fellowship, based at the University of Oxford since 1903. The Scholarships for India began in 1947 and have been awarded to 5 outstanding applicants each year so far.

Students from anywhere in the world can apply for a Rhodes Scholarship and many find that taking part in our rigorous selection is a profoundly positive experience which leaves them well placed to go on to a Rhodes Scholarship or other opportunities worldwide.

The Rhodes selection process aims to choose young people with proven academic excellence who also show exceptional character, leadership, the energy to use their talents to the full and a commitment to solving humanity's challenges. The selection process includes a rigorous review process before the finalists interview with a selection committee composed of renowned experts and leaders in diverse fields.

Rhodes Scholars form a lifelong community of people in many fields and careers, united by a commitment to having a positive impact on the world. Scholars from India have gone on to pursue careers ranging from public policy, literature, law, medicine, scientific research, etc

This year's winners continue the fantastic legacy of excellence.

Manhar Bansal

Manhar Bansal is a final year undergraduate student at the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru with an interdisciplinary focus in philosophy and literature. His work seeks to theorise the possibility of a human self that is attuned but not reducible to its socio-historical specificities. His academic writing has been published in multiple venues and has received recognition by the Society for Humanistic Anthropology and the South Asian Studies Association of Australia. At NLSIU, he served as the chief editor of a student journal, headed a student-led academic support programme, and co-convoked a theory reading group. He has also been learning French, writes for his public newsletter, and enjoys dancing and swimming. Manhar aspires to a public-facing academic career with the aim of introducing humanistic education to young people. At Oxford, he intends to pursue the MSt in Comparative Literature and Critical Translation.



Yogita

Yogita completed her Master's degree in Chemistry in 2025 as an Erasmus Mundus Scholar at Université Paris-Saclay and Adam Mickiewicz University, where her thesis focused on the synthesis of boron-rich polymers and their formulation into nanoparticles for boron neutron capture therapy. She holds a BSc (Hons) in Chemistry from St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi, where she was awarded the DST-INSPIRE Scholarship and the Mitsubishi Foundation Award. She served as Senior Under Officer of the National Cadet Corps and led community education initiatives through the college's Social Service League. As Vice President of the Chemistry Society, she organised inclusive science outreach events to promote chemistry in public discourse. A trained Bharatanatyam dancer, she also enjoys doing theatre and travelling. She is committed to making innovative nanomedicine more equitable and envisions building platforms for accessible scientific research and education. At Oxford, she aims to pursue a DPhil in the Department of Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics or the Department of Chemistry.



Nikhita Sampath

Nikhita hails from Karnataka and holds a B.A.,LL.B. from St. Joseph's College of Law, Bengaluru. She currently works as a Law Clerk-cum-Research Associate to Hon'ble Mr. Justice M M Sundresh at the Supreme Court of India. Her academic interests lie at the intersection of law and applied ethics. Training in Bharatanatyam, Carnatic vocals, Saraswati Veena and the Harmonica, she is committed to balancing her passion for the arts with her academic pursuits. Nikhita intends to pursue the BCL at Oxford University.



Taif Altaf

Taif is currently a student at Ashoka University, pursuing a postgraduate diploma as part of the Young India Fellowship program. With a background in political science, he has undertaken research on Access to Justice in India. Through his work with Voluntas, a public policy firm, he has undertaken research on access to justice in India and has also paid particular attention to issues of due process and epistemology in law. He aims to further this research at Oxford and eventually provide policy-based recommendations in enhancing justice delivery in India. He enjoys Urdu poetry, hiking and playing football.



Suprabath Reddy Dwaram

Suprabath Reddy Dwaram completed an MS in Quantitative Economics at the Indian Statistical Institute, Delhi, and a BA (Hons) in Economics from St. Stephen's College, Delhi. He has worked on theoretical aspects of fair allocation problems, political economy, and the implementation of rural employment guarantee (NREGA) in Bihar. He is passionate about teaching and spending time in the field. Through a DPhil. in Economics at Oxford, Suprabath hopes to advance research on microeconomic theory and informal labour markets. Besides fieldwork, he loves Wodehouse, wordplay, and cryptic crosswords.



Aniketa Kabir

Aniketa Kabir, Mumbai, graduated from Azim Premji University in 2025 with a B.A. in History. His undergraduate thesis explores the formation of the Self and the Other in dialogic texts from early India. He is interested in studying premodern Indian texts and the ways in which they have been interpreted and circulated, under the conditions of modernity, particularly through the axis of religion. Additionally, he wants to engage with questions on data and democracy in India through his emerging interest in quantitative research methods. Aniketa is keen on birdwatching and Western Classical music, and is learning to play the violin. At Oxford, he hopes to pursue an MPhil in Classical Indian Religion.



Professor Sir Rick Trainor, CEO of the Rhodes Trust, said:

"The Rhodes Trust is delighted to introduce the extraordinary 2026 Class of Rhodes Scholars Elect who represent cultures and perspectives from every corner of the world. For more than a century, the Rhodes Trust has brought exceptional individuals to Oxford and fostered a vibrant global community. We eagerly anticipate the invaluable contributions these Scholars will make, not just during their studies, but throughout their lives as they join the community of Rhodes Scholar alumni who are creating a more equitable and sustainable future for the world."

The Trust is committed to ensuring that the world's diversity of background and thought is reflected at Rhodes House, which has expanded the Rhodes Scholarship to include the Global Scholarships and new constituencies in recent years, including West Africa, East Africa, China, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Malaysia, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon & Palestine and the United Arab Emirates.

The applications for the 2027 Rhodes Scholarships will open in June 2026. More information about the Scholarship application be found at: www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/apply.

Contact Information

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About the Rhodes Trust and Rhodes Scholarships

The Rhodes Trust, based at the University of Oxford, is an educational charity that forges brighter futures for individuals and the world.

We do this through a family of global fellowship programmes. All these programmes find brilliant people from around the world, give them wonderful opportunities to learn and act together, and support them as they form lifelong communities. We began in 1903 with the **Rhodes Scholarship**. This is the world's pre-eminent graduate fellowship, bringing exceptional young people of character to the University of Oxford to study. Over 8000 Rhodes Scholars, from more than 50 countries, have gone on to serve at the forefront of education, business, science, medicine, the arts, politics and beyond. All this is made possible by the wonderful generosity of our Second Century Founders, John McCall MacBain and the Atlantic Philanthropies, as well as over 3000 other benefactors from around the world.

A hundred years on, we helped create the **Mandela Rhodes Foundation**, which finds, funds, and empowers



young Africans to study in South Africa. In 2016, we partnered with Atlantic Philanthropies to create the **Atlantic Institute** which empowers catalytic communities of emerging leaders to advance fairer, healthier, more inclusive societies. A year later, we helped launch **Schmidt Science Fellows** in partnership with Schmidt Futures, which believes in a vision of a world where interdisciplinary science flourishes without limit.

We are based at Rhodes House in Oxford, which we are currently transforming into a world-class facility for gathering, learning, collaborating and sharing. Rhodes House is home to most of our staff team who offer a comprehensive programme of support and learning for our Rhodes Scholars, convene a lifelong network for our alumni, and run several of our partnership programmes.