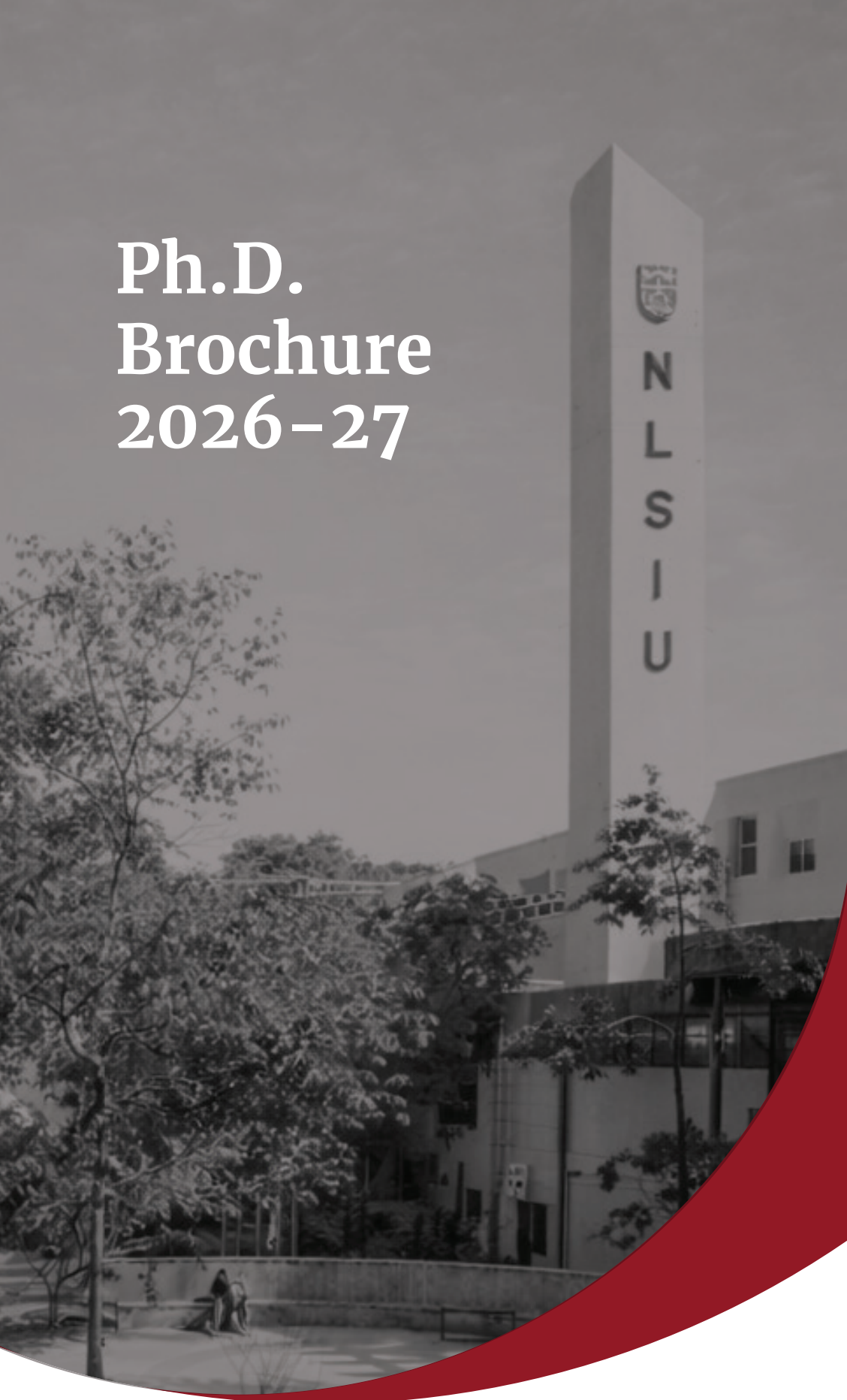


Ph.D. Brochure 2026-27



Admissions 2026



**National Law School
of India University**
Bengaluru

Table of Contents

About NLSIU	03
About the Ph.D. Programme	04
Admission Ph.D. Law	06
Admission Ph.D.(Social Sciences, Humanities and Public Policy)	07
Admission test and selection - Indian Students	09
Admission test and selection - International Students	11
Doctoral Fellowship	13
General Notes	15

About NLSIU

NLSIU was established in 1987 to be a pioneer in legal education. Over the last three decades the University has evolved as an innovative leader in law, social sciences, humanities, and public policy education and research in India. It has also consistently been ranked first among the law universities in the National Institute Ranking Framework (NIRF).



About the Ph.D. Programme

The Ph.D. programme at NLSIU is a full-time, intensive programme designed to train scholars who can make original contributions to scholarship and public discourse, particularly to address complex social challenges. Structured coursework, close faculty supervision, and sustained opportunities for teaching and research assistance form integral components of the programme.

Programme overview

There are two categories of Ph.D. programmes at NLSIU:

Ph.D. (Law) and Ph.D. (Social Sciences, Humanities and Public Policy)

The Ph.D. (Law) programme enables candidates to pursue advanced research in their chosen areas of law. On the other hand, NLSIU's Ph.D. (Social Sciences, Humanities and Public Policy) programme is designed for scholars from social sciences, humanities and public policy backgrounds who wish to conduct research that cuts across disciplines.

Key features of the Ph.D. programme at NLS



Doctoral candidates undertake a minimum of three years of research, including mandatory coursework spread over three trimesters.



Each scholar is supported by a Research Advisory Committee consisting of a supervisor and two other experts, and is expected to make periodic presentations on progress.



Doctoral fellowships available for select candidates.

“My PhD journey at the National Law School of India University (NLSIU) has been challenging in the best way possible and deeply grounding. Being a history student in a law school has expanded and enriched my questions and methods that genuinely strengthen my research, as I study Sikkim through a spatio-legal and historical lens. The doctoral fellowship provided by the University has given me the freedom to focus on my research without constant financial anxiety, while the everyday academic life pushes me to think more clearly and confidently about my work. I am especially grateful for the opportunity to present my work at an international conference at Sciences Po, which has helped me see my doctoral project as part of a much larger scholarly conversation. I believe NLSIU has provided me a space where I am growing not only as an academic, but also as an individual.”

Meghashree Dev

PhD Scholar



Admission

Ph.D. Law

Eligibility (Indian nationals)

Following candidates are eligible for applying for Ph.D. (Law):

- a. Candidates having a 5-year/ 10-semester/ 15-trimester bachelor's degree in Law through regular mode from a recognised University having secured a minimum of 55% marks in aggregate or its equivalent grade on a point scale wherever the grading system is followed (50% of marks or its equivalent grade in case of SC/ST/OBC- NCL/Persons with Disability.);
or
- b. Candidates having a 3-year/6-semester/ 9-trimester bachelor's degree in Law (LL.B.) through regular mode from a recognised University having secured a minimum of 55 % marks in aggregate or its equivalent grade on a point scale wherever the grading system is followed (50% of marks or its equivalent grade in case of SC/ST/OBC-NCL Persons with Disability); and Candidates having a Master of Laws degree (LL.M.) through regular mode from a recognised University having secured an aggregate of at least 55% marks or its equivalent grade (50% of marks or its equivalent grade in case of SC/ST/OBC-NCL)/ Persons with Disability);
or
- c. Candidates having passed the Solicitors Examination conducted by the Bombay Incorporated Law Society and having completed a bachelor's degree in Law (LL.B./LL.B. (Hons.) degree from a recognised University through regular mode;
or
- d. Candidates having a Master of Business Laws (MBL) degree from the National Law School of India University with a minimum CGPA (Cumulative Grade Point Average) of 4.00 and having completed a bachelor's degree from a recognized University through regular mode.

Provided that candidates in their final year of study in the respective degrees in (a), (b) and (c) shall be eligible to apply, subject to the candidate securing the minimum marks or equivalent grade prior to the date of commencement of the Ph.D.



Admission

Ph.D. (Social Sciences, Humanities and Public Policy)

Eligibility (Indian nationals)

Following candidates are eligible for applying for Ph.D. (Social Sciences, Humanities and Public Policy) :

- a. Candidates having a 4-year/ 8-semester/ 12-trimester bachelor's degree through regular mode from a recognised University having secured a minimum of 55% marks in aggregate or its equivalent grade on a point scale wherever the grading system is followed (50% of marks or its equivalent grade in case of SC/ST/OBC-NCL/Persons with Disability.);
or
- b. Candidates having a Master's degree in any discipline through regular mode with a minimum of 55% or equivalent grade (50% of marks or its equivalent grade in case of SC/ST/OBC-NCL/Persons with Disability) and a Bachelor's degree from a recognised University through regular mode;
or
- c. Candidates having passed the Company Secretaryship examination conducted by the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) and been awarded Associate Membership of the Institute (ACS) and having completed a bachelor's degree programme from a recognised University through regular mode;
or
- d. Candidates having passed the Chartered Accountants examination conducted by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) and been awarded Membership of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, and having completed a bachelor's degree programme from a recognised University through regular mode;

Provided that candidates in their final year of study in the respective degrees in (a), (b) and (c) shall be eligible to apply, subject to the candidate securing the minimum marks or equivalent grade prior to the date of commencement of the Ph.D.



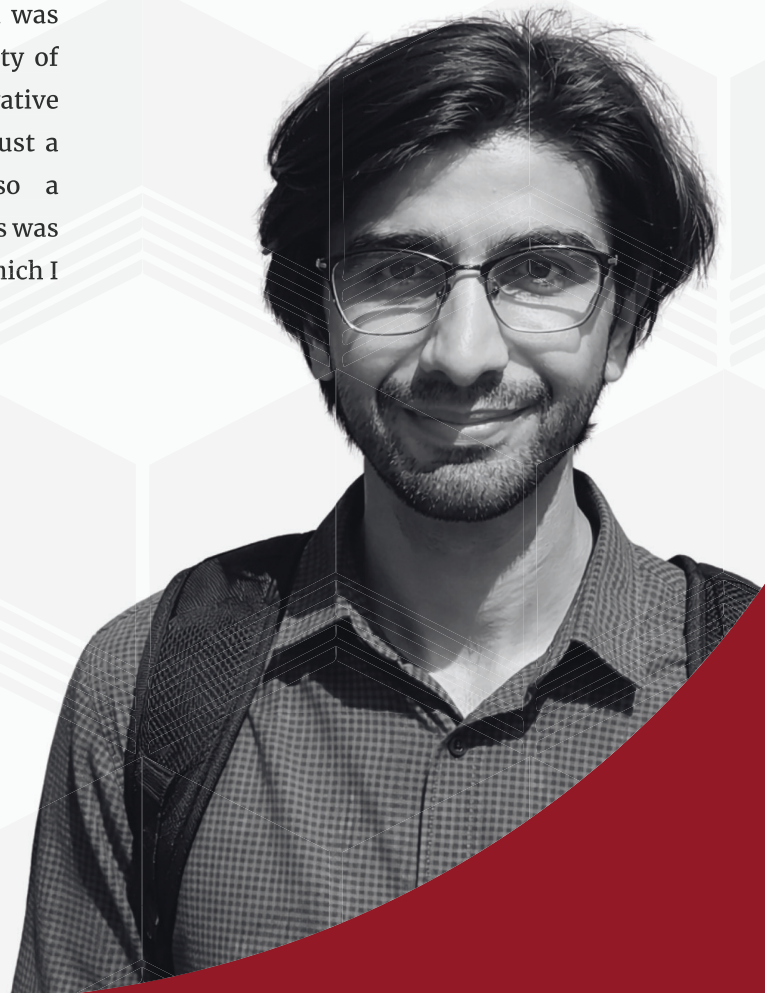
“Being the oldest NLU in the country, the university has had a fabled past, producing some of the brightest minds in the legal fraternity.

In my initial days, it was the multi-disciplinary coursework which enthralled me. I completed courses ranging from practical IP licensing to game theory, specific sessions on technical writing and a teaching assistantship for a course along with my supervisor. The subjects proved to be immensely helpful for my research, and I got the opportunity to interact with faculty even outside my domain, inspiring me to pursue my research from different perspectives.

NLS organizes regular conferences, seminars and workshops geared towards doctoral candidates, and I got the opportunity to participate in one such workshop which was organized in collaboration with University of Zurich. The workshop series had an innovative structure where each member was not just a presenter of their research, but also a commentator on other scholar’s work. This was an enriching experience and something which I will cherish for a long time.

Gaurav Dahiya

PhD Scholar



Admission test and selection (Indian nationals)

Candidates should submit their application form through the official application portal (<https://nlsatadmissions.nls.ac.in/>).

As part of the application, candidates are required to submit a research proposal of about 6–8 pages.

The research proposal must:

- a. Contain a Tentative Title,
- b. Identify a research problem and discrete research questions,
- c. Demonstrate background research and a thorough awareness and understanding of the relevant literature on the research problem,
- d. Identify the methodological approach to respond adequately to these research questions.

The dates for the oral presentation shall be announced after the completion of the NLSAT Ph.D.

For more information on the NLSAT admissions test: <https://nlsatadmissions.nls.ac.in/>

“I have greatly valued my doctoral experience in Public Policy at NLSIU. The University’s intellectually vibrant environment consistently fostered academic rigor. I am deeply thankful to my supervisor, external examiner, and the doctoral council for their sustained guidance and support throughout the process. The doctoral exchange program with Humboldt University provided crucial time and space to focus on completing my dissertation. This exposure also enriched my research through sustained engagement with diverse scholarly traditions. Overall, the program has significantly shaped my academic training and research outlook.”

Devansh Shrivastava

PhD Scholar



Admission test and selection

(International students)

International students are also welcome to join the Ph.D. programme at the National Law School.

Eligibility:

International applicants must be citizens of countries other than India and hold a master's/postgraduate degree in law, social sciences, or humanities from a recognised university with at least 55% aggregate marks or equivalent grade (final-year students may apply subject to successful completion).

Application process:

Candidates should submit their application form through the official application portal (<https://internationaladmissions.nls.ac.in/>). As part of the application, candidates are required to submit a research proposal of about 6–8 pages. The research proposal must:

- a. Contain a tentative title,
- b. Identify a research problem and discrete research questions,
- c. Demonstrate background research and a thorough awareness and understanding of the relevant literature on the research problem,
- d. Identify the methodological approach to respond adequately to these research questions.

The admission test for the PhD programmes shall test the students on Research Aptitude and subject-matter expertise. Candidates who secure more than 50% marks in the written test will qualify for evaluation of their Research Proposal. They will be invited to an interview, where they will make an oral presentation before the PhD Admissions Review Panel constituted for this purpose. The final offer of admission shall be based on the assessment of the research proposal and interview by the PhD Admissions Review Panel.

For more information on the admissions test for international students:
<https://internationaladmissions.nls.ac.in/>



“Pursuing my PhD (Law) Degree in Trusts and Property Law at the National Law School of India University, Bangalore, as an international student was an extraordinarily enriching experience. NLSIU’s well-structured programme, particularly the Research Methodology intensive course, provided a strong foundation for rigorous scholarship, while the faculty’s mentorship and intellectual generosity helped both my thesis and my approach to academic research. The institution’s vibrant research culture, exceptional library resources, and willingness to support niche areas of legal scholarship made my work on Equity and Trust, combined with Property law, possibly and deeply rewarding. As a foreign candidate, I found NLSIU to be a remarkably inclusive and welcoming academic community where diversity is genuinely valued.”

Kaushani Pathirana

PhD Scholar



Doctoral Fellowship

Selected candidates may receive a Doctoral Fellowship (currently, Rs. 50,000 per month) for up to three years, subject to satisfactory research progress and institutional contributions. Fellows are expected to work approximately ten hours per week on University roles linked to their dissertation and academic professional development. The fellowship increases annually by 10% based on performance and is not available to those in paid full-time employment or already holding national fellowships such as UGC-JRF.



"My experience as a PhD research scholar in Law at NLSIU has been academically rigorous and intellectually enriching. As a practicing Architect and Urban Designer, the programme enabled me to undertake interdisciplinary research in urban planning law, integrating legal analysis with planning and governance perspectives. The structured doctoral framework, supported by close faculty mentorship and periodic critical review by academicians across disciplines, significantly strengthened the quality and depth of my research. The research process is well streamlined, ensuring a balance between academic rigour and institutional support, and fostering policy-relevant legal scholarship."

Prathima N

PhD Scholar



General notes

- a. Regulations governing the Ph.D. programme are available on the University's website at <https://www.nls.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Amended-PhD-Regulations-2023-March-2025.pdf>
- b. NLSIU does not offer rolling admissions for Ph.D. programmes and new cohorts begin only at the start of the academic year in July.
- c. Candidates may apply for either Ph.D. (Law) or Ph.D. (Social Sciences, Humanities and Public Policy), but not both simultaneously.

In case of any queries regarding the
Ph.D. programme, please email at
resdeg@nls.ac.in



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