



SHIV NADAR
INSTITUTION OF EMINENCE DEEMED TO BE
UNIVERSITY
DELHI NCR

SCHOOL OF
HUMANITIES AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES

MA RURAL
MANAGEMENT

Admissions 2025-27



Shiv Nadar Institution of Eminence launched a 2-year MA in Rural Management program in September 2023. This is a one-of-a-kind multidisciplinary program, the likes of which does not exist anywhere else in the country. We are pleased to announce that after 2 very successful batches of 40 and 43 students for 2023-25 and 2024-26 respectively, the program for 2025-27 will commence in August 2025.

The Ministry of Education, Government of India, has conferred upon Shiv Nadar University the status of Institution of Eminence (Deemed to be University) in August 2022. This recognition makes the university a part of the distinguished league of top public and private institutions empowered to elevate Indian universities to become world-class teaching and research institutions.

In recent years, rural India has been a focus of great national attention. It has been witness to major crises like farmers' suicides; it has also been a hub of enormous dynamism, becoming the largest and fastest growing market for India's industrial sector. Central and state governments also invest hundreds of thousands of crores every year to provide better amenities and secure livelihoods to rural Indians.

There are many talented young people in rural India who, with the appropriate training, can lead this dynamic, rapidly transforming region in the years to come. These are the professionals our program is creating. We plan to develop gen-next innovators and creative leaders with the requisite understanding and skill sets demanded by the emerging challenges and opportunities of rural India, which no other comparable program offers.

What is unique about our program is that it not only provides students with an in-depth multi-disciplinary understanding of the problems of rural India but it also nurtures their capacity to find innovative and far-reaching solutions. The program is based on a unique pedagogy, combining innovative classroom and studio teaching, with two full semesters devoted to field education, including internships with the very best practitioners in rural India. All students have mentors through and beyond the program. Another distinguishing feature of the program is that all its courses not merely aim to build professional competencies but pay equal attention to cultivating the necessary value-systems that develop compassionate human beings, with the capacity for deep listening and necessary sensitivities to the worldviews of those they will be working with in future.

Students who graduate from this program will be eagerly sought after by civil society organisations, major government programs, CSR organisations, donor foundations, UN agencies, etc. Our program has been crafted with specific inputs from potential employers, many of whom are already in touch with us offering to employ our graduates. Thus, demand for our students is built into the program.

Rural India is also a huge untapped market for emerging entrepreneurs. But there is no program offering the comprehensive education required for such aspirants, which needs to include deep understanding of rural economy and society, with both its challenges and possibilities.

If you are a young person with a passion for and commitment to serving in rural India, this is the program for you. Preference will be given to applicants from disadvantaged regions and communities. Preference will be given to women candidates. 50 seats are open for admission.

A large number of scholarships are available for qualified and eligible students, including several full scholarships for deserving candidates.



Semester One Trans-disciplinary Fundamentals



The first semester will be an introduction to relevant theoretical concepts and tools, fundamental dimensions of rural reality in India, as also the basics of research methodology. This is the foundational understanding students require to be able to both understand rural India and also to appreciate the challenges of rural management and be able to find possible solutions. The first semester will have 4 courses.

Political Economy of India's Development since Independence 4 credits

As India won a hard-fought independence from British rule, the government and the people set about trying to build a free nation, where each person would at least have access to the basic needs of life, in an atmosphere of freedom, liberty and equality of opportunity. This set of lectures is a reflection on the last 75 years, the achievements and the failures, a review of the most important government policies and programs, the thinking behind them and why, how and in what ways these need to change. Building upon the political economy perspective of the “founders” of Economics from the 18th and 19th centuries, even while incorporating the exciting new insights of 20th and 21st century heterodox economists, the course provides a unique trans-disciplinary framework, within which students can understand the most pressing problems facing rural India and study the effectiveness of government programs and policies since independence. The idea is also to introduce students to ideas from beyond academia, in order to enable them to understand how solutions to rural India's most important and neglected problems, such as water, food and livelihoods, could potentially be crafted. Running threads of the course are gender and ecology, which provide a critical lens through which to examine development paradigms.

Reflective Practice | 4 credits

The main aim of the MA in Rural Management program is to create a large cadre of “reflective practitioners” who can be powerful catalysts for change in rural India. The course on Reflective Practice involves students learning about both the inner and social transformation required for enduring change to occur in society, and the imperative complementarity between the two. The course will, therefore, introduce students to creative ways in which they can challenge the structures of power that are embedded in society at every level, including the transformation of their own consciousness, which has internalized and ingrained the logics of these structures. The course will use innovative pedagogic practices, which help open pathways for students to much more experientially realise the what and the how of the changes required.

Understanding Indian Society

4 Credits

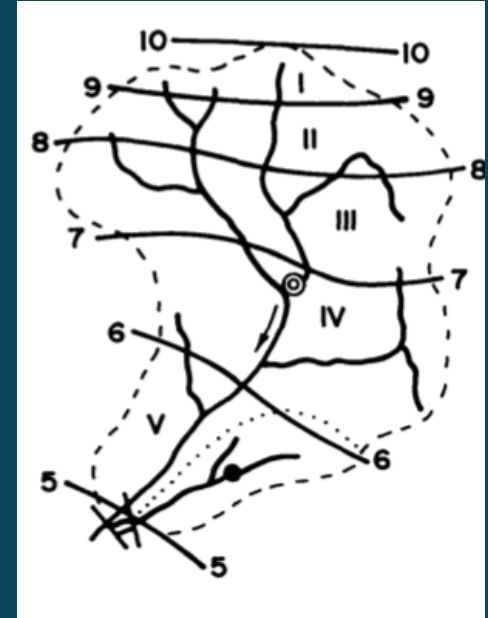
It is a truism that every person in society is endowed with multiple identities, so it should be equally obvious that relations of power and domination are also multi-dimensional. But as the history of both the social sciences and of social movements shows, it has proved remarkably difficult to sustain sensitivity to the plurality of power relations. This course has two main objectives. The first is to show that, in order to be effective, all power including economic power must be translated into social power – that is, it must employ modalities that are compatible with existing political and cultural structures. The second is to introduce students to the challenges of “intersectionality”, the most recent conceptual label for the multiplicity and mutual entanglement of different dimensions of power. The approach is primarily empirical, with theoretical issues being discussed mostly through specific examples or instances. Students will be encouraged to choose a particular dimension/axis of power that interests them and will make individual presentations based on a historical event or issue of their choice. The purpose of the presentations will be to highlight the co-implication of the multiple axes of power.





Research Methods 4 Credits

This course is intended to give a comprehensive introduction to research methodology and methods used in social sciences. The course is expected to equip the students with capabilities for formulating a research problem and identifying research questions, collecting data, analysis and interpretation of data using quantitative and qualitative methods and presenting the findings in the form of reports, research papers or dissertations. The emphasis throughout the course is that a mix of inter-disciplinary and quantitative-qualitative methods will give useful insights and conclusions for policy.



Semester Two

Management Challenges in Rural India



The second semester will be a deeper dive into the most important and most neglected management challenges in rural India, enabling the students to understand the problems, as also critically assess the various attempts at finding solutions to these problems. The second semester will have 4 courses.

Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry 4 credits

This course provides a historical perspective on agriculture, livestock and forestry, and reviews the frameworks adopted for bringing change in the organisation of these activities. While contributing about 16% of the GDP, they engage nearly 50% of the workforce and hence are the largest sources of livelihoods in rural areas. The “Green” and “White” revolutions marked a fundamental break in the way these activities are organised. They firmly established a high cost and high external input framework, which has become the new normal. This course will analyse these frameworks in some detail, highlight their limits and the need to look beyond them. The course emphasises the diversity of Indian agriculture, livestock systems and forests and the need to adopt a differentiated approach to meet the challenge of this diversity. A major part of this course is devoted to discussions on alternative approaches and low-input systems in agriculture, livestock and forestry, which enables advancement of multiple livelihood options for rural communities. The course also contains lectures on the key sources of published, secondary data on agriculture and allied activities and how they can be utilised to study contemporary issues in these sectors.



Ecology, Water and Climate Change

4 Credits

This course attempts to introduce the students to the concept of the ecosystem and how human life is shaped by ecosystem functions and processes. It builds on the basic concepts of ecology as an integrative discipline, focusing on landscapes, ecosystem boundary, scale, diversity, stability, balance, adaptation, sustainability, resilience, externalities vs. joint products, time, and feedback loop. It then covers the evolution of the notion of sustainable development and why that has now become a priority in any development discourse, and how water is central to all material exchanges in ecosystems and between ecosystems and the economy. The course brings understandings of ecosystem processes in water and energy and how access to and control of both water and energy are mediated and structured by social relations of class, caste, tribe, community and gender. In the current context of climate change and the challenges posed by planetary boundaries in the era of the Anthropocene, keeping agri-food systems and rural development as the focus, the course examines alternative perspectives of food security, sovereignty, food justice and nutritional security on the one hand, and water and environmental security on the other, showing how an integration is possible only using an ecological lens.

Health, Nutrition and Education

4 Credits

Students will learn the political economy of health and nutrition and the impact and consequences it has for poor people. The course seeks to equip potential rural development practitioners with enough knowledge and strategic skills to work on health and nutrition interventions in rural areas. These include the state of health and health care services in rural India; the determinants of health such as food, landholding, environment, state of health and nutrition care services, the pharmaceutical industry, connectivity, etc.; analytical sessions on the political economy of health and nutrition, especially the way structural violence plays out in poor health; addressing iniquity in health and nutrition, such as working with health systems, health workers and other determinants of health- to draw lessons from the better performing states for the laggards.

The module on education will bring out the importance of education from multiple perspectives, while tracing the history of education through the first four decades post-Independence, and then the next four decades following the international call for Education For All. The course will examine the successes and failures along the way. It will grapple with the multiple facets of the issue – the deep impact of caste inequalities on education; how the most progressive policies are lost to poor implementation; the languishing public school system and how it is eminently possible to turn it around; the fallacious discourse that private schools are the only answer to education in India; and why our classrooms are our stuck in rigid, non-context specific teaching methods, failing to integrate the rich alternatives in pedagogy that have evolved in multiple contexts over time.





Management of Institutions

4 Credits

The absence of powerful institutions of the disadvantaged sections of Indian society is widely regarded as a key factor explaining the persistence of deprivation. This course will cover a wide range of such institutions such as Panchayati Raj Institutions, Self Help Groups and their Federations, Farmer Producer Organisations, cooperatives across various sectors, etc. Besides these formal organisations, India has also had social movements which have impacted state and national policies. Many informal collectives have been formed around managing common property sources, and the use of technology has enabled collectives where members are distantly located. We will introduce students to these various forms of collectives and institutions, their importance in any sustained development process, their design principles, and why some are effective, and some are not. The course will teach students the basics of business management practices such as marketing, HR, finance (including financial services in rural areas, insurance), etc. Students will also learn basics of project management such as: What is a project cycle? How are development projects designed? What are the key elements of a project proposal? What are the planning and monitoring tools for project management?

Semester Three

Field Education

16 credits

During the third semester, students will travel to select field locations across the country, where they will learn from our carefully selected partners, who over several decades, are recognised as the best practitioners on each of these themes, who have crafted solutions to some of the most difficult management challenges facing rural India. The following courses are being offered for this batch in the third semester:

1. Sustainable Agriculture
2. Building and Nurturing Women's Institutions: Why, What and How
3. Participatory Water Management and Sanitation
4. Violence against Women and Girls



Semester Four



Internships 16 Credits

The fourth semester will be devoted to Internships with partner organisations in their field of work in rural India. The internship period will be 12 weeks. The final 4 weeks of the semester will be spent at the university writing out a project report based on the internship.

Our expectation from the internship is that it will further build the understanding of our students on the challenges facing rural India, where they gain a deeper knowledge of the roots of these problems and the possible ways in which solutions can be crafted for the same. For our partners, these internships provide an opportunity to engage our students in tackling any challenges that they might be facing, any kind of study that they may require to be done related to their work or to help build an understanding of issues that may be new to their work. The central purpose of the internship is to add value to the work of our partners, while contributing to a greater understanding of rural management challenges among our students.

Core Faculty

The program is taught by some of the most eminent academics, practitioners and thinkers the country has known, covering the entire gamut of issues taught under this program. Most of them have spent their entire professional lives working in, and around issues related to, rural India

1. Dr. Mihir Shah, Distinguished Professor and Chair
2. Dr. Darryl Reed, Distinguished Professor
3. Dr. Rajeswari Raina, Professor
4. Dr. Himanshu Kulkarni, Professor of Practice
5. Shri P S Vijayshankar, Professor of Practice
6. Dr. Sandali Thakur, Associate Professor
7. Dr. Bhargabi Das, Assistant Professor
8. Dr. Gurkirat Kaur, Assistant Professor
9. Dr. Ajmal Khan, Assistant Professor
10. Dr. Venkat Ramanujam, Assistant Professor
11. Shri Rahul Jain, Fellow

Advisory Group and Guest Faculty

1. Dr. Gita Sen, Distinguished Professor & Director, Ramalingaswami Centre on Equity & Social Determinants of Health, Public Health Foundation of India
2. Dr. Satish Deshpande, former Professor, Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics
3. Dr. Yogesh Jain, Public Health Physician
4. Shri SM Vijayanand, IAS retd, Former Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala
5. Ms. Sushma Iyengar, Founder, Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan
6. Shri Gagan Sethi, Founder & Chair, Janvikas and Centre for Social Justice
7. Shri Vipul Mudgal, Head, Common Cause
8. Shri Apoorva Oza, Global Lead, Aga Khan Foundation
9. Shri Biraj Patnaik, Executive Director, National Foundation for India
10. Shri KJ Joy, Senior Fellow, Society for Promoting Participative Ecosystem Management
11. Shri Shashi Bhushan, Director, SATHI Network
12. Dr. Sabyasachi Das, CEO, RRA Network
13. Prof. Dipa Sinha, Ambedkar University, Delhi
14. Dr. Rajani Ved, Executive Director, National Health Systems Resource Centre
15. Shri Sunil Chavan, Director, Dr. ML Dhavle Trust
16. Prof. Seema Purushothaman, Azim Premji University
17. Dr. Ramesh Bhatti, Centre for Pastoralism, New Delhi
18. Prof. Richa Kumar, IIT Delhi

Life in the University

Students participate in and help organize a wide range of intellectual activities, like academic seminars, exhibitions, on-going research projects, library, publication and other outreach activities in SHSS and any other School or Department that ignites an academic interest in them. The students are encouraged to participate in all intellectual and performing arts and sports activities promoted in the University.



BOTANIC GARDEN

Designed and established by Dr. Jyoti K Sharma, the Thematic Botanic Garden is the first of its kind in North India. It has more than 600 plant species, including rare species from mountains and humid areas, which are difficult to grow in the warm tropical climate of NCR. The conceptualisation of the park is unique. It assembles a particular group/theme/category of plants in one place, which otherwise is impossible in a classical Botanic Garden. For example, rare fruit plants no longer found in markets, including fruits of Barhai, Khirnee, or Kalth, can be observed in the Fruit Planes Garden.



4 Schools	50 Programs Offered
~4000 Students	~300 Faculty Members
286 Acres Campus	10+ Research Centers
4200 Alumni	155+ Labs and Studios

INDOOR SPORTS COMPLEX

The state-of-the-art Indoor Sports Complex has won NDTV's Design and Architecture Awards in 2017. The building has table tennis, basketball, and badminton courts on the ground floor. It is equipped with a unisex gym, four squash courts, and a 200-meter-long indoor running track on the first floor. Additional activities include wall climbing, billiards, football, chess, and playing carrom while relaxing on bean bags.



LIBRARY

The library houses 40,000 academic resources and textbooks, and has a light reading section to encourage the habit of reading among students. Its facilities include discussion rooms, 24/7 study room, wi-fi access, and a digital database that provides access to e-books, periodicals, and dissertations made available from various national and international archives.



SACRED GROVE

Located near the Dargah on the eastern side of the campus, this Date Palm Grove consists of 900 individuals covering an area of 0.75 hectares. According to the elders of Chithara village, these are 300-400 years old, relics from Mughal invaders who came from West and camped here in the wetland area. The seeds of date left along their camping trail, which later grew into date palm trees spreads across through North India, including Shiv Nadar University's campus.

LAKE

The campus lake is part of the Dadri wetlands, also called the Bil Akbarpur wildlife habitat. The lake was almost dried up when the University was founded. Its immediate revival has allowed a rich number of fish and aquatic plants to thrive in it, such as Nitella, Chara, and Hydrilla. The lake attracts resident and migratory birds mostly in winters.

Selection Criteria and Process

Basic Qualification: Bachelor's Degree in any discipline.

In the application form, candidates are expected to answer questions in writing related to their reasons for applying for this program, how they hope to benefit from the program, as also their future plans. The selection of students for the program will involve the following stages:

- a. their answers to the questions in the application form will be evaluated
- b. candidates shortlisted on the basis of step a will be called to the university for a written test, interview, and group discussion which will be the final step in their selection.

Selection Timeline

- Applications for the program are now open and will close on 15th April 2025
- Shortlist of candidates for interviews will be announced by 1st May 2025
- In-person interviews and tests of shortlisted candidates will be held at the university campus in May 2025
- Final list of selected candidates will be announced by 15th June 2025
- Program begins on 4th August 2025

Application Instructions

Applicants will be required to pay a non-refundable application fee of Rs. 1000.

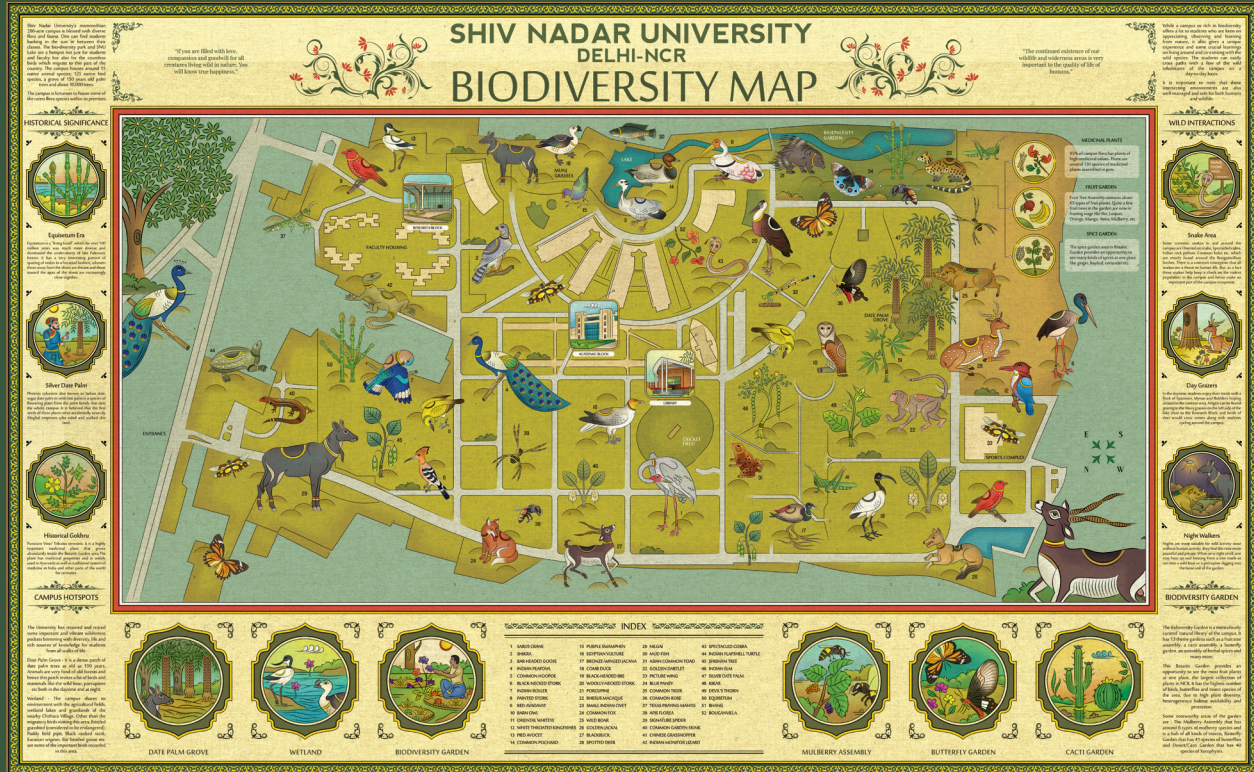
All interested applicants shall apply online. Please follow the instructions carefully.

- Online upload of following documents is required
- Passport size colour photograph
- Current CV
- All Mark sheets/Degree Certificates (10th Standard onwards)

Fees Structure (2025-2027)

	2025-26	2025-27	Total
Tuition Fees	₹ 4,10,000	₹ 4,10,000	₹ 8,20,000
Other Fees	₹ 2,28,000	₹ 1,02,000	₹ 3,30,000
Admission Fees	₹ 25,000		₹ 25,000
Refundable Security Deposit	₹ 25,000		₹ 25,000
Total Fees	₹ 6,88,000	₹ 5,12,000	₹ 12,00,000

The total fees for the 2-year program is Rs. 12 lakh, payable in four installments over 2 years. A large number of scholarships are available for qualified and eligible students, including several full scholarships for deserving candidates.



Events



Students from the Tea Gardens of Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal performing a Sadri (Chota Nagpuri) dance at the World Indigenous Peoples' Day celebration.



A student from the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group - Kolam tribe, performing a rap song in Marathi about the environmental costs of development borne by the tribal people.



Dr. Mihir Shah, Distinguished Professor and Chairperson of the MA-RM Program, addressing a large number of partner organizations from all over the country at the Experience Sharing Workshop



Shri Kuldeep Singh, CEO, Bharat Rural Livelihoods Foundation, which has provided bulk of the scholarships, addressing the Workshop



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