



Draft Summary Report of
RBL IFRE Scholarship – To deserving & meritorious students from underprivileged backgrounds selected by Ashoka – UG Programme.

Summary Report

Introduction

The **RBL-Scholarship for Deserving & Meritorious Students**, in partnership with **IFRE** and implemented by **Ashoka University**, supports academically talented students from underprivileged backgrounds. Aligned with RBL's '**H.E.LO.**' philosophy, this scholarship removes financial barriers, enabling students to pursue a quality undergraduate education without concern for tuition and other expenses.

The initiative provides **financial support** for four years, fostering academic excellence, leadership, and personal growth. It empowers students to thrive at Ashoka University, promoting **social mobility** and long-term success. The scholarship also ensures that recipients have access to mentorship and resources for a holistic development that extends beyond academics.

By offering opportunities to **meritorious students** who face financial constraints, **the RBL-Scholarship helps break cycles of poverty** and contributes to creating a more inclusive society. The project, which spanned from **2019 to 2023**, has played a crucial role in enabling students to achieve their academic and professional aspirations while fostering leadership and personal growth. Covering **three states**, the scholarship specifically supports students pursuing undergraduate degrees in **Computer Science, Economics & Finance, and Philosophy & Psychology**, with a total of **three beneficiaries** receiving financial aid and development opportunities. A brief of the programme's cardinals is detailed below:

Geographic Outreach	Types of UG Courses Covered	Total No. of Courses	Total No. of Beneficiaries
3 states	Computer Science Economics & Finance Philosophy & Psychology	3	3

Relevance of the Project

The **RBL-IFRE Scholarship Programme** is essential in bridging the financial gaps and fostering equitable access to higher education. The scholarship serves a dual purpose:

1. **Alleviating Financial Barriers:** By providing financial support to students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, the scholarship helps reduce the burden of tuition fees and other costs associated with higher education.
2. **Supporting Holistic Development:** Beyond financial aid, the RBL-IFRE Scholarship Programme also provides access to **mentorship, career development resources**, and opportunities for **personal growth**. These holistic interventions empower students to overcome socio-economic barriers and succeed academically and professionally.

By addressing both the financial and developmental needs of students, the RBL-IFRE scholarship empowers them to pursue their education and **contribute meaningfully** to society. The impact of such initiatives extends beyond individual students; it helps foster a more **inclusive** and **equitable educational landscape**, contributing to the development of India's future workforce and leadership.

RBL-IFRE Programme is a crucial part of the solution, ensuring that talented students from economically weaker sections have the opportunity to access quality education, break the cycle of poverty, and contribute to India's growth and prosperity.

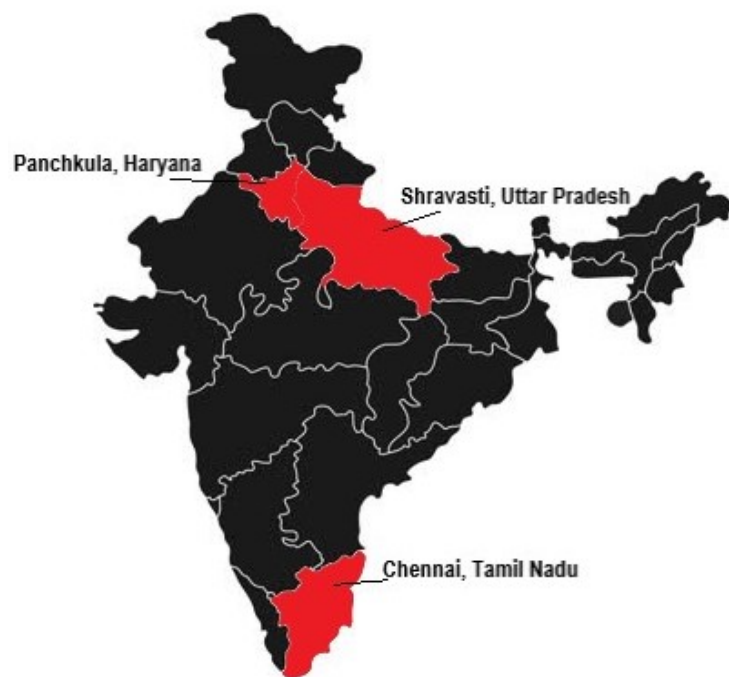
Project Objectives

The RBL-Scholarship for Deserving & Meritorious Students is designed to create meaningful opportunities for academically talented individuals from underprivileged backgrounds. The scholarship aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Financial Support
- Access to Quality Education
- Promote Academic Excellence
- Foster Leadership and Personal Growth
- Enable Social & Economic Mobility

Geographic Coverage & Socio-Demographic Profile

The IFRE Scholarship is a significant component of Ashoka University, supported by RBL Bank. This enables the scholarship to cater to students not only from across India but also internationally. The students covered under this impact study reflect this broad geographical representation, with each beneficiary hailing from a different state—one from Panchkula, Haryana, another from Chennai, Tamil Nadu, and the third from Shravasti, Uttar Pradesh. This diversity underscores the program's commitment to supporting meritorious students from varied regions, ensuring that talented individuals from different backgrounds have access to quality education.



The RBL-funded IFRE Scholarship specifically supports students from economically weaker sections, recognizing financial constraints as a major barrier to education and personal growth. The beneficiaries fall under different income brackets, reflecting a range of economic challenges. Beneficiary 3 had an annual household income of up to INR 50,000, Beneficiary 2 came from a family earning up to INR 2,50,000, and Beneficiary 1 belonged to a household with an annual income of up to INR 9,00,000. This variation highlights the scholarship's role in addressing financial disparities and providing equitable educational opportunities to students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Project Activities

Outreach and Mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying and reaching out to deserving students from underprivileged backgrounds across three states. Conducting awareness campaigns to inform students about the scholarship and application process.
Screening of Beneficiaries & Qualification Checks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluating applicants based on academic merit and eligibility criteria. Ensuring that only deserving students with strong academic potential are selected.
Screening of Financial Documents of Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verifying financial backgrounds to confirm the need for financial assistance. Ensuring transparency in the selection process by validating income and support documents.
Academic Bridge Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing foundational academic training to help students transition into university life. Bridging knowledge gaps to ensure students are prepared for rigorous undergraduate coursework.
Writing & Communication Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing students' writing, speaking skills for academic and professional success. Conducting workshops to build confidence in articulation and structured communication.
Regular Course Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring students attend and excel in their chosen undergraduate courses. Providing academic support and mentoring to help maintain strong performance.
Career Development Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guiding students on career paths, industry expectations, and professional growth. Organizing career counseling sessions, industry interactions, and skill-building workshops.
Internship & Placement Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating internship opportunities to provide hands-on industry experience. Connecting students with potential employers to enhance career prospects.
Final Placement & Higher Education Admissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing foundational academic training to help students transition into university life. Bridging knowledge gaps to ensure students are prepared for rigorous undergraduate coursework.

Sampling

Given the qualitative nature of the study and its small-scale design, **purposive sampling** was employed to select participants who could provide rich, in-depth insights relevant to the research questions. This non-random sampling method allowed to intentionally choose individuals with specific characteristics or experiences that aligned with the study's focus, ensuring that the data gathered was particularly relevant and insightful.

Qualitative Sampling:

Stakeholders	Number of interactions
Beneficiary Students	3
IFRE Team Members	1
Parents of Students	1
Total	5

Key Findings

Key Objective	Achievement Status	Remark
Financial Support	Fully Achieved	Successfully implemented, the scholarship covered tuition fees and other educational expenses for four years, allowing students to focus entirely on their academics without financial stress.
Access to Quality Education	Fully Achieved	By covering three states , the scholarship ensured that deserving students had access to quality education, the initiative helped create opportunities for marginalized students, fostering greater inclusivity and diversity in higher education and breaking cycles of poverty and enabling upward social mobility.
Promote Academic Excellence	Fully Achieved	The scholarship recipients pursued rigorous undergraduate courses in Computer Science, Economics & Finance, and Philosophy & Psychology , fostering a strong academic foundation and enabling them to perform at their highest potential.
Foster Leadership and Personal Growth	Fully Achieved	Offer guidance beyond academics, including personal and professional development programs and access to resources that helped students build confidence, resilience, and decision-making skills.
Enable Social & Economic Mobility	Fully Achieved	Notable improvement observed; Empowered the students with education and career opportunities that leads to long-term career success and socio-economic upliftment.

The impact assessment of the RBL-IFRE Scholarship project (2019-2023) was conducted using the IRECS Framework, which evaluates five key dimensions: Inclusiveness, Relevance, Expectations, Convergence, and Service Delivery. This comprehensive approach enabled a thorough analysis of the project's effectiveness in achieving its goals and delivering tangible benefits to its beneficiaries. Each dimension was carefully examined to assess the project's overall impact. The impact assessment of the RBL-IFRE Scholarship project (2019-2023)

used the IRECS Framework to evaluate five key dimensions: Inclusiveness, Relevance, Expectations, Convergence, and Service Delivery.

Inclusiveness focused on the project's success in reaching diverse beneficiary groups, with efforts to reduce barriers and promote equitable access. **Relevance** assessed how well the project aligned with community needs, with the scholarships significantly addressing educational and career gaps. **Expectations** explored whether the project met participants' and stakeholders' expectations, with high satisfaction levels reported. **Convergence** examined the project's integration with other initiatives, showing strong collaboration and maximizing impact. Finally, **Service Delivery** evaluated the efficiency and effectiveness of implementation, noting innovative solutions to logistical challenges.

These findings highlight the project's achievements and areas for improvement, offering valuable insights into its overall impact on education and social development. The inclusiveness, relevance, expectation, convergence and service delivery of the intervention were evaluated and are mapped below:

Below are the key impact findings. IRECS Framework has been used to assess the inclusiveness, relevance, expectations, convergence, and service delivery effectiveness of the programme.

Inclusiveness

(The extent to which communities equitably accessed the benefits of assets created and services delivered)

Age Group: 2 of the 3 scholars are 21 years old and 1 scholar is more than 21 years of age.

Gender Representation: 2 of the 3 beneficiaries are male and 1 female.

Geographical Reach: All 3 Beneficiaries hail from different states, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana & Tamil Nadu, highlighting the geographical spread & diversity.

Course Distribution: 2 scholars had Major in Computer Science, 1 in Philosophy & Psychology, and 2 scholars had Minor in Entrepreneurship, 1 in Mathematics, showcasing academic diversity.

Awareness Channels: 2 scholars learned about the scholarship programme through friends/family and 1 learned through the university

Relevance

(The extent to which communities equitably accessed the benefits of assets created and services delivered)

Financial Constraints : 2 scholars with annual HH income up to INR 2.5 LPA & would not have studied at Ashoka without scholarship help.

Annual HH Income: 2 scholars come from households earning upto INR 2.5 LPA annually, indicating financial need while 1 comes from households earning between INR 9-10,00,000 annually.

Alternative to Scholarship: 2 scholars reported that they would not have been able to study at Ashoka University if they didn't receive the scholarship. While the remaining 1 would have taken education loans to pay the fees, without scholarship.

Expectation

(The extent of intended and unintended positive (benefits), socio-economic, and cultural changes have accrued for beneficiaries)

Need Based Allocation: The Scholarship funds were allocated as per the varying paying capacities of the students families.

Beneficiary Student - 3's annual family income was upto INR 50,000, consequently he received 100% scholarship covering tuition fess, residence, meals and was also provided with monthly stipend.

Beneficiary Student - 2's annual family income was upto INR 2,50,000, consequently she recieved 100% waiver on tuition fees and residence.

Beneficiary Student - 1's annual family income was upto INR 9,00,000, consequently he received 100% waiver on just the tuition fees.

Outcomes: All the beneficiary students have successfully **completed their undergraduate** programme from Ashoka University.

Education Impact: 2 of the 3 beneficiary students are pursuing further higher education from prestigious instituions.

Economic Impact: Remaining 1 of the 3 beneficiary students have been placed and have started substantial contributions in their respective family incomes.

Convergence

(To what extent does the intervention support national legislation and initiatives that aim to improve equality and human rights? What lessons can be learned?)

Alignment with CSR Rules: Promoting education, including special education and employment enhancing vocation skills especially among children, women, elderly, and the differently abled and livelihood enhancement projects; Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013

Alignment with SDGs: The programme supports SDG 4: Quality Education , SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 10: Reduced Inequality, SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals, by providing scholarships, skills training, and career readiness to economically disadvantaged students, enhancing their employability and reducing poverty.

Alignment with ESG Principles: Principle 4: Businesses should respect the interests of and be responsive to all their stakeholders ; Principle 5: Businesses should respect the interests of and be responsive to all their stakeholders ; Principle 8: Businesses should promote inclusive growth and equitable development.

Alignment with National Policies: The programme aligns with key national policies like the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020; National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship; and the Central Sector Scheme of Scholarship; focusing on equitable access to quality education and skill development for underrepresented groups.

Service Delivery

(The degree to which cost- and time-efficient methods and processes were employed to achieve results, along with the likelihood that the net benefits of the intervention will continue)

Application Process: All beneficiary students shared **positive review of the application process** and felt that the instructions on the application form were clear, the application materials were accessible, the implementing team was supportive.

Onboarding: Academic Bridge Programme, the 3-weeks experience helped students from low-income families, first-generation collegegoers, and non-English speaking backgrounds in onboarding smoothly into the Ashoka University environment.

Placement Process: Career Preparatory Programme, All beneficiary students received the support for internship & placements with 1 of 3 students acquiring jobs after their respective courses.

Recommendation to other studetns: All beneficiary students gave a clear positive response and enthusiasm in willingness to recommend this scholarship to other eligible students.

Theory of Change

Activities	Output	Outcome	Impact
Identification of Beneficiaries	Select 3 students for financing their Ashoka University - UG Programme.	Beneficiaries from diverse backgrounds gained access to the scholarship programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access to quality education for underserved communities, creating a pathway for upward social mobility
Student verification and final selection for provision of Scholarship	Finance the Ashoka University - UG Programme of the selected students.	Accelerated academic performance and motivation to perform better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced motivation and academic confidence, creating future-ready individuals with improved educational outcomes
Academic Bridge Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A three-week course with a graded syllabus designed by Centre for Writing and Communication (CWC) and the Introduction to Critical Thinking (ICT) Support services like the Ashoka Centre for Well Being, Writing Centre, and Office of Learning Support 	Improved English language, academic reading and writing, thinking critically, synthesizing information, and presenting cogent arguments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are equipped with the required competency to excel in their academic endeavours Critically engaging with other complex texts in their curriculum. Networking support, emotional support, and social support to enable them to navigate campus life confidently.
Career Preparatory Program	Internship & Placement Prep Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job roles specific resources Personalized resume reviews and mock interviews for multiple functions Resume Crafting Ace the Interview Mock interviews and resume review sessions 	Scholars gained professional and personal development, including better decision-making, and communication skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ready for the first internship: Participants better equipped to handle workplace challenges development Ready for the first job and are empowered to take on leadership roles and make impactful decisions in their careers
Placement Support and Career Development	All students participated in placement process	Empowered the students with professional skills for economic & social mobility with better career prospects and education opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved socio-economic conditions for students and their families through employment or higher education; long-term community upliftment

In **conclusion**, The RBL-IFRE Scholarship played a pivotal role in shaping the academic journeys of both Student 1 and Student 2, serving as more than just financial aid—it was their gateway to higher education. By covering tuition, accommodation, and living expenses, the scholarship eliminated financial barriers, allowing them to focus on their academic aspirations. Today, Student 2 is pursuing a Master’s in Business Analytics in the U.S., while Student 1 continues his studies through the Ashoka Scholars Programme. Their success highlights the transformative power of scholarships in changing lives and fostering opportunities. As they move forward, they not only realize their own dreams but also serve as inspirations for future students facing similar challenges.

Recommendation

The recommendation section outlines forward-thinking inquiries aimed at enhancing the ongoing scholarship programme. It focuses on the recommendations to address potential gaps and improve the programme for the benefit of students and all stakeholders.

Sr. No.	Particulars	Impact Findings	Recommendation for Funding Agency	Recommendation for Implementation Agency
1	Increasing Funder-Scholar Interactions	Beneficiaries met their funder once in their entire journey of the Ashoka UG Programme.	Funding partners should engage with students through periodic meetings, webinars, and mentorship sessions for progress sharing and gratitude. As mentors they will strengthen student support.	The implementation agency should facilitate regular student-funder interactions, provide progress reports. Utilizing digital platforms to showcase success stories and offering mentorship and academic support will ensure holistic student development.



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