

May 2014

Dear Friends,

The [International Mahayana Institute](#) (IMI) recently celebrated its 40 year anniversary since it was established by Lama Yeshe in December 1973. During this time the IMI has grown from a handful of monks and nuns to its current membership level of 275. Our community is truly international with members from 28 different countries.

Since its inception the International Mahayana Institute has been striving to secure conducive conditions for its members to protect their ordination and become qualified to serve others, in particular through FPMT centers, projects and services.

One of the primary ways IMI supports Sangha is by promoting a sense of community, through disseminating important information to its members. When Lama Zopa Rinpoche wishes to send advice to all FPMT Sangha, this is communicated through the IMI Office. When Sangha members are sick or dying, this information and requests for prayers are sent to members through the IMI office. When there are special events such as retreats or courses, etc. or sponsors wish to make offerings to the Sangha such as new robes, etc. this is communicated through the IMI office. When FPMT centers, projects or services send relevant announcements through the CPMT e-group, or to the IMI Office, such as hoping to host a Sangha person at the center, IMI informs its members. In this way the IMI office acts as a centralized resource for members' questions and requests for help, as well as a resource for the larger FPMT community. IMI hires the services of an administrative assistant to perform those tasks.

In order to further help its members and FPMT centers, projects and services, IMI has set up a network of [Regional Representatives](#) to help cultivate a sense of community for its multi-national members and to better understand what the needs of its members are. The IMI Regional Representatives are also a resource for FPMT centers for help with local Sangha issues.

Other ways that IMI works at cultivating a sense of community for its members is by providing regular newsletters with information about what is happening within the larger monastic community. The IMI maintains an online database of member profiles, which is accessible to all members, giving them contact information for each other. Photos and IMI Sangha news are also regularly posted on [Facebook](#).

The international FPMT community helps IMI address the financial needs of its members through annual donations from FPMT centers, projects and services to the Lama Yeshe Sangha Fund (LYSF). NB: International Sangha Day this year falls on July 31st – watch out for Claire's reminder about this, coming soon! IMI also runs other fundraising campaigns. This income enables IMI to financially support some IMI Sangha activities. Applications from IMI Sangha members are assessed by a small committee including a representative from FPMT International Office. The LYSF is currently providing monthly support to monks and nuns in need who are engaged in full time FPMT study programs and solitary retreat – we hope that these individuals will thereby become better qualified to serve, perhaps as an FPMT registered teacher. In addition, the LYSF sponsors the annual pre-ordination training course at Tushita Meditation Centre, Dharamsala, India as well as group retreats with Lama Zopa Rinpoche. In 2014 the LYSF will provide support for Sangha in need who wish to attend the

Light of the Path retreat in North Carolina and the *Bodhicaryavatara* Retreat in Australia. These retreats are very important for Sangha to attend, as they are experiential and practice-oriented events, incredibly precious opportunities for people to receive key lineage transmission from Rinpoche on how Rinpoche wants us to practice in the FPMT. In this way, Sangha can integrate Rinpoche's instructions and pass them along to others in the monasteries or when they serve at the centers.

IMI's vision is to expand its ability to support its members by providing greater opportunities for living within monastic communities along with the more extensive training monastic communities can provide. Caring for our aging Sangha is also a priority.

We hope that this update gives you a helpful insight into IMI and how we are working as part of the FPMT community to support the vision of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche to serve sentient beings!

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Chantal Tenzin Dekyi
Director, IMI