Mahamudra Centre for Universal Unity

Job Description for the Spiritual Programme Coordinator (SPC)

Mahamudra Centre is a Tibetan Buddhist retreat centre in New Zealand, affiliated with FPMT. It follows the Gelug tradition of Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism, as taught by our founding teachers Lama Thubten Yeshe and Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche. It is located in a quiet rural location 200 km from Auckland, near Colville on the Coromandel Peninsula.

We are actively looking for an SPC, to coordinate and manage the spiritual programme in alignment with FPMT policy and guidelines. We are delighted to welcome Ven Robina who will lead a 10-day retreat in August and to have Ven Tony Beaumont teaching over the 22/23 summer.

The SPC is responsible for:

- Planning the spiritual programme in consultation with the director and visiting and resident teacher(s).
- Planning the budget for the spiritual programme in consultation with the director.
- Ensuring that the spiritual programme reflects the unique FPMT lineage, as presented in FPMT education programs and the FPMT Five Pillars of Service.
- Implementing the programme:
  - engaging non-residential teachers, facilitators and meditation and puja leaders.
  - organising their travel, accommodation, offerings, attendant, translator etc.
  - coordinating advertising and marketing
  - liaising with visiting and resident teachers about the programme
  - monitoring events and teachings and providing feedback
  - ensuring that the logistic requirements of the program are met
  - ensuring that materials required for teachings and practices are available
  - overseeing the centre's dharma library and shop
  - making provision for the care of the gompa and maintenance of offerings
  - carrying out general administration associated with the programme.
- Providing logistical support to people engaged in personal retreat at the centre.
- Preparing reports for the director, board meetings as required.
- Liaising with FPMT Australasia and the SPC network both locally and internationally.

Skills and experience

- You will have a commitment to Buddhist practice, ideally with a commitment to or as a student of FPMT and Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche.
- Familiarity with the FPMT tradition of study, practice, service and ethical conduct
- It is ideal but not mandatory to have previously offered service as a SPC in a FPMT centre, or assisted a SPC.
- You are able to liaise with a range of different situations and people – you can apply Buddhist practice to your interactions with others.
- Adaptability with a ‘can do attitude’ – able to embrace change and adapt where necessary.
- Team player – ability to work with a range of different people.
- Understanding and competence with online publishing (website editors, social media etc).
Personal qualities
This role is a special opportunity for a mature and self-sufficient person firmly grounded in their spiritual practice. There are few distractions for someone wishing to devote considerable time to their personal formal practice. There are however unique pressures in living and working in a dharma environment and this is heightened by the centre’s relative isolation (there is a cafe and general store a few minutes up the road; it’s a 30 mins drive to the nearest small town (pop. <1500)). There is no public transport and very minimal health services available locally.

There is a small residential community the SPC lives among. The SPC works closely with the centre manager, who manages a small team of volunteers. One or more monastics are based at Mahamudra and we are delighted to welcome several very senior monks to the centre in 2022 to engage in personal retreats.

Accommodation is also offered to members of the public in-between residential courses. All those visiting or staying at the centre are asked to abide by the five precepts, including refraining from all sexual activity. This is to help foster the semi-monastic environment of Mahamudra and support monastics and anyone else in long-term retreat.

The natural environment of the Coromandel is outstanding, with some of New Zealand’s most beautiful beaches, forests, mountains and conservation estate. It is a temperate climate but winters are cold and wet.

Conditions and Entitlement
The applicant must have the legal right to work in New Zealand.

Time commitment
This is a part-time position, requiring an average of 25 hrs work per week although this varies considerably throughout the year depending on the activities in the programme. Most of the activity at Mahamudra Centre has traditionally happened during the summer months but Covid has disrupted this pattern. The centre is closed normally in July and may close to the public during long residential group retreats. The Centre is experimenting delivering an online programme and this may change the pattern of work over the course of a calendar year.

Leave
The SPC will be entitled to four weeks of paid leave each year after 12 months.

Remuneration
The remuneration package includes self-contained, private accommodation, food and a small salary.

Appointment
The SPC is co-appointed by the Centre director and the Centre Services director at FPMT International Office. The SPC’s primary line manager is the Centre Director, and the SPC should also keep FPMT International Office informed as to the overall programme.

The initial appointment is for a period of two years, which may be renewed. NZ employment law provides for a 90-day trial period.

How to apply
Please email Katrina Robertson (Acting Director), at director@mahamudra.org.nz, a cover letter and a detailed resume, outlining your dharma background and professional experience.

Thank you for your interest in this role.