

De-Tong Ling Retreat Centre
Kangaroo Island, South Australia
Position of Centre Director

This is a precious opportunity for a student of Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Spiritual Director of the Foundation for Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT), to offer service as Director of a special, well-established retreat centre in Australia. De-Tong Ling Retreat Centre (DTL) has an active Board ensuring robust governance, and the Director will report to and be supported by the Board. The position of Director is usually for two years and is renewable if it is considered beneficial.

Background

De-Tong Ling is situated on 1300 acres of wilderness at the western end of Kangaroo Island in South Australia. Its remote location, pristine natural environment and deep silence are the setting for a retreat centre designed from the beginning as a place for engaging in long-term meditation. All those who have stayed at DTL for that purpose have praised it as being ideal for retreat. Four solidly built, self-contained earth-walled retreat houses are now in operation, and a beautiful Enlightenment Stupa with gompa below has now been completed after many years of volunteer effort. A 450-acre property next door (“Yacca Creeks”), owned by close friends of DTL, has been the base from which the centre has been developed. Although privately-owned, it acts as a support for DTL.

In addition to offering the individual houses for retreat, DTL offers two annual guided group retreats. A Group Retreat Facility (GRF) is being built at the Centre, which will provide accommodation, kitchen, dining, office facilities and a meditation hall. Currently, the only person living at the Centre is the Retreat Centre Manager, besides those on individual retreat. At certain periods building workers are on the GRF construction site.

Situation

The preferred option is for the Director to live at the Retreat Centre on Kangaroo Island, with free accommodation in a self-contained earth-walled and furnished house, which is large enough for two people. This is an opportunity to live in a beautiful, peaceful environment, surrounded by native vegetation and close to the Enlightenment Stupa which sits beside a lake. The monthly Board meetings would then be attended via Skype. The alternative is for the Director to live on the mainland, preferably in Adelaide, which is where the rest of the Board live and where the monthly Board meetings are held.

If the Director chooses to live at the centre, ideally they would take on the responsibilities of the Retreat Centre Manager, a position that will become vacant in late March 2018. This Manager organises retreat arrangements for individuals and supports them during their retreat. The advantages of taking on this additional role are outlined below under “Compensation and rewards”. However, once the Group Retreat Facility is completed, the Retreat Centre Manager role would need to be separate from that of the Director, given the greater work load that would result.

Key Responsibilities and Job Description

The Director will be responsible for directing the Centre management and continuing the development and promotion of De-Tong Ling, in line with fulfillment of the FPMT mission. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Understanding and maintaining FPMT policies and guidelines
- Reporting to and working with the Board to implement and refine the existing plan for DTL’s development
- Maintaining the greatest possible harmony within the Centre and with members and friends

- Oversight of DTL's administration, including the:
 - management and care of members and volunteers
 - maintenance of the financial health of the Centre i.e. managing the budget, initiating grants and fundraising activities, and generating new sources of income
 - management of the retreat application process, in line with FPMT Spiritual Programme requirements
 - upgrading of administrative and promotion policies and strategies
 - maintenance of the retreat centre property and buildings
- Oversight of support provided to those in retreat, as supervised by the Retreat Centre Manager, including retreat transport, physical needs, food, safety
- Organising regular community and Board meetings, fostering clear communication and encouraging members of the community to take an active role in the Centre development
- Centre promotion and public relations in the broader community, including website management and social media use
- Liaising regularly with the Director of Buddha House, an FPMT affiliated non-residential teaching centre located in suburban Adelaide in South Australia
- Representing the centre at FPMT national and international meetings

Selection Criteria

- Devotion to, or at least sincere respect for Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche, and familiarity with and a commitment to the work and values of the FPMT organisation
- Enthusiasm for Dharma practice and previous key service in an FPMT centre or project
- Familiarity with retreat, either from having done individual retreat or having worked in a retreat centre
- A good working knowledge of Tibetan Buddhism, and sensitivity to Tibetan culture and its protocols
- Desirable skills:
 - Strong, clear-sighted organisational capability, including ability to prioritise tasks and manage time effectively
 - Computer literacy, with an understanding of the potential and capabilities of social media
 - Good English verbal and written communication
 - Understanding of financial management, including development of and working within a budget
- Desirable personal attributes:
 - Ability to work co-operatively and harmoniously with others
 - Patience, a kind heart and a sense of humour
 - Ability to provide inclusive leadership and compassionate management
 - Reliability, flexibility, self-motivation, enthusiasm
- Practical Requirements:
 - Police clearance
 - Valid driver's license
 - Australian citizenship or for international applicants, a legal right to work in Australia
 - Some independent income

Immediate tasks:

- Making the stupa available to the public through provision of appropriate facilities and procedures, in accordance with Lama Zopa Rinpoche's advice
- Promoting the availability of DTL's retreat facilities to ensure their constant use
- Overseeing the construction of the Group Retreat Facility

Compensation and rewards

The Director role is currently a volunteer position, with limited funds allocated to reimburse the Director's work expenses. It gives the opportunity to provide service to Lama Zopa Rinpoche, FPMT and those undertaking serious retreat.

If the Director intends to live at De-Tong Ling, this is a perfect opportunity to live in a beautiful, quiet environment while undertaking a relatively (compared to a busy city centre or undeveloped centre) low-stress job. If this option were taken, free, quality accommodation in a house with all modern conveniences and solar power would be provided. Furthermore, if the Retreat Centre Manager role were also taken on while living at the Centre, a modest stipend would be paid to cover food, island travel and other expenses. Also, a lap-top computer and mobile phone would be provided, and a 4x4 vehicle and a tray-top utility vehicle would be available for use.

How to Apply:

Please write to the current Centre Director with a resume and personal references or referee contact details to the postal address RSD 418, Kingscote, SA 5223 or to the email address welcome@detongling.org, together with a covering letter explaining your interest in this position and outlining your experience with FPMT. Please feel free to email to discuss further details. Lama Zopa Rinpoche will be requested to check the karmic benefit of all shortlisted applicants.