

REACH FELLOWSHIP - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Who can apply for the REACH Fellowship?

The Fellowship is open to alumni from across the Somaiya ecosystem. Applicants who studied at Somaiya School, Junior College, Undergraduate, or Postgraduate levels are eligible to apply. Applicants from the School or Junior College system should have spent at least four years within the Somaiya ecosystem during their educational journey. Applicants who have completed their Undergraduate (3/4 years) or Postgraduate (2 years) degree from a Somaiya institution are also eligible to apply.

2. What are the working hours and leave policy?

The Fellowship is a field-immersive and community-engaged programme. Fellows are expected to dedicate a minimum of 8 working hours per day. Since the work involves community interaction, travel, field visits, events, and documentation, timings may occasionally remain flexible depending on the nature of the activity. Fellows are entitled to one leave per month, and Sundays will generally remain off unless programme activities require otherwise.

3. I am a fresher and have never worked with communities before. Will I receive mentoring?

Yes. The Fellowship is designed as a guided learning and capacity-building experience. Fellows will undergo mentoring sessions and orientation programmes led by faculty members, researchers, practitioners, and field experts who have experience working with communities and sustainability projects. Training will also be provided in research design, community engagement, documentation, storytelling, visual communication, questionnaire preparation, field ethics, and both technical and soft skills.

4. Can I leave the Fellowship before the completion of the tenure?

The REACH Fellowship is a short-term residential, field-intensive, and impact-oriented programme focused on baseline research, community engagement, and sustainability learning. We are looking for committed individuals who are genuinely willing to immerse themselves in the experience and grow through it.

REACH is not just a Fellowship — it is a journey.

It reaches inward — to question, unlearn, and rediscover.

It reaches outward – to communities, cultures, and living knowledge systems.

It reaches forward – to document, digitise, archive, and share what must not be lost.

REACH Fellows are expected to be seekers, storytellers, researchers, and pathmakers. If you have hesitation about committing to a field-based immersive experience, we strongly encourage you to reflect carefully before applying. The Fellowship is intentionally designed to challenge perspectives, expand comfort zones, and create meaningful personal and professional growth.

5. Will the Fellowship tenure be extended?

For the current cohort, the Fellowship duration is eight-nine months, from the end of July to the end of February. Any extension beyond this period will depend on project requirements, performance, funding availability, and mutual agreement. Extensions, if applicable, may include continued stipend support.

6. What will my deliverables and responsibilities be?

During the induction period, Fellows will have detailed one-on-one discussions with mentors and programme coordinators to understand their project goals, timelines, responsibilities, and expected outputs. Before beginning field deployment, Fellows will undergo a structured induction and training programme. The Fellowship is designed not only around outputs, but also around building long-term skills and professional confidence.

7. Where will Fellows stay during the programme?

Fellows will be provided accommodation at the respective Somaiya campuses / Living & Learning Lab locations associated with their projects. Food and basic hospitality arrangements will be taken care of by the respective campuses. Local travel required for Fellowship activities is expected to be managed within the Fellowship amount provided, and no additional local travel allowance will be separately provided.

8. Can Fellows visit their families during the Fellowship?

Yes, Fellows may visit their families with prior intimation and approval. However, since the programme is immersive, field-based, and time-bound, Fellows are encouraged to maintain continuity in their engagement and avoid frequent travel that may affect project timelines, community relationships, or deliverables. Families are welcome to visit Fellows at the



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campus locations whenever feasible; however, they are requested to make their own accommodation and stay arrangements.

9. What kind of food and accommodation will be provided?

Fellows will be provided vegetarian food and comfortable accommodation within the campus facilities. The Fellowship is designed as a residential and immersive field-learning experience rather than a luxury residency programme. While essential facilities and basic amenities will be available, Fellows should be prepared for a simple, community-oriented lifestyle that may differ from urban comfort expectations. The programme encourages adaptability, shared living, field readiness, and deeper engagement with local contexts and communities as part of the learning journey.

10. How will the progress of Fellows be evaluated?

The Fellowship will include regular review and mentoring meetings to ensure structured progress and continuous learning. Fellows will have monthly review meetings with programme leaders and weekly meetings with mentors at mutually convenient dates and times. During the first month of the Fellowship, a detailed work plan, project timeline, meeting schedule, and expected deliverables will be jointly developed by the Fellows and mentors and approved by the programme leaders. The progress and timely completion of activities will be a shared responsibility of both the Fellows and their respective mentors.

11. Will Fellows receive a certificate or recognition?

Yes. Fellows who successfully complete the programme and fulfil the required deliverables, documentation, and project commitments will receive an official Fellowship completion certificate from the programme.

12. Do Fellows need prior research experience?

No prior formal research experience is mandatory. However, applicants should demonstrate curiosity, willingness to learn, openness to field immersion, collaborative thinking, and commitment towards sustainability, community engagement, and documentation-based work.

13. Will Fellows work individually or as a team?

Each Fellow will lead an individual project while also working collaboratively with mentors, community members, other Fellows, and programme teams during workshops, dialogues, field activities, and documentation exercises.

14. What kind of projects will Fellows work on?

Projects may involve areas such as traditional ecological knowledge, sustainability practices, narrative ecologies, regenerative agriculture, water stewardship, biodiversity documentation, storytelling, visual communication, community-based research, cultural mapping, experiential education, and other themes aligned with CASCADE's programme areas and Living & Learning Labs. The brochure includes an overview of the projects, indicative tasks, and expected deliverables for reference.



15. What support will be available in case of a medical emergency?

During the induction programme, Fellows will be introduced to their mentors, programme coordinators, and designated points of contact at the respective campuses and Living & Learning Labs whom they may reach out to for guidance and support beyond Fellowship-related tasks. Most Living Lab locations have access to nearby medical facilities and local support systems. Fellows will also be familiarised with the surrounding community, essential services, and emergency contacts during their initial orientation and field visits to help ensure a safe and supportive residential and field-learning experience.

Applicants are encouraged to inform the programme team during the interview and induction process about any specific medical conditions, allergies, dietary restrictions, or health-related considerations that may require attention during the Fellowship period. Fellows will also be responsible for carrying, managing, and appropriately storing their personal medications and medical essentials throughout the programme duration.