



ASHA for Education,
P.O. Box 1287,
Princeton, NJ 08542.
USA.

Application for Project funding

Please attach additional sheets wherever necessary. We will also appreciate your annual report, if you have one. Thank you for your time and patience.

Organization Profile

Name of the organization: Nalamdana

Date of establishment : December 1993

Name of contact person: Tara Thiagarajan

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(Phone number) (609) 987 1114 (h) (609) 252 4213 (w)

1) Brief description of the long-term objectives of the organization:

Nalamdana seeks to play a significant role in creating a visibly more aware and informed society in India that will take a more active role in its own progress and well being. We believe that change must come from within and we work to achieve our mission through empowering people with the information and behavioral impetus for change.

2) Brief description of last three relevant projects and how they were funded:

All Nalamdana major programs are ongoing:

General health and hygiene: Spreading preventative health messages through street theater, music and other methods. Messages targeting diseases such as jaundice, diarrheal diseases such as cholera, parasitic infection and others that can be prevented through boiling water and better hygiene. Also diseases such as malaria and typhoid that can be prevented through maintaining more sanitary conditions. Primary funding for this program comes from local corporations and organizations including the Rotary Clubs of Madras, Madras Round Tables, TVS Group of Companies and the Indian Overseas Bank.

HIV/AIDS: Spreading awareness of HIV/AIDS particularly relating to methods of transmission and prevention of HIV. Methods of communication include street theater, music, workshops and T.V. shows. Primary funding for these programs comes from the Ford Foundation, ActionAid and Tamil Nadu Aids Cell.

Women's Empowerment: The Nalamdana's women's program seeks to encourage the active and aggressive participation of women in the governance of their communities and the affairs that directly affect their well being. The program activities include street theater in rural communities followed by workshops to educate women about the role of the panchayat and to encourage them to stand for panchayat elections. Funding for this program is primarily through ActionAid.



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Project Profile

1) **Project name and/or number :** EDUCATION PROGRAM _____

2) **Project Location:**

Village or town or city: Chennai (Madras) India _____

District and State: _____

3) **Brief description of the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the area (income level, occupation, etc.):**

Madras or Chennai is an urban metropolis with an estimated 1250 slums and several hundred more low income housing communities within the city limits. Nalamdana's education program targets students from these communities.

4) **Who is the project directed toward (Describe target population in terms of age, sex, number)?**

The project is directed at students from these target communities that are in the 8th grade or above that demonstrate (i) academic ability (ii) leadership (iii) motivation and (iv) a commitment to social change.

5) **Aims of the project:**

In the low income/ urban slum communities' in Tamil Nadu the literacy is estimated to be only 30%. Hardly any of these people have the opportunity to attend college and make a transition into a level of livelihood where they have the luxury of thinking beyond the short term. Nalamdana's mission is to create a cohesive group of the brightest and most socially committed students from low income communities and empower them through education, both inside and outside the classroom, so that they might eventually become local leaders for long term change.

6) **How do you plan to accomplish the aims listed above?**

Description of Plan

Deadline

Note that all of these activities are ongoing:

Academic Development: Strong academic training is very important to develop a basic foundation of knowledge and thinking skills. In addition, early academic success is very important in India, particularly because college admissions and subsequently available jobs are tied very closely to examination results. Nalamdana closely monitors student performance and staff assist them in areas where they might need – or want - extra instruction. Nalamdana is also in the process of building a library of text books. In addition, students performing very well that are in schools of lower standard are encouraged and assisted in moving to better schools.

Building a cohesive group: We believe that a group of talented and committed people can do a lot more together than isolated individuals. Therefore Nalamdana works to help these students get to know each other. Activities include informal workshops or simply social activities such as picnics. Nalamdana aims to



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hold between 3 and 5 formal gatherings for the students in the form of workshops or field trips every year. In addition Nalamdana scholars have the opportunity to meet when volunteering with Nalamdana and at the award ceremonies.

Providing broad exposure The high school syllabus in most Indian schools is limited in scope with regard to current affairs and more 'non text book' types of learning. However, we believe that understanding of national and world affairs in various disciplines are important to develop broader perspective and stimulate thought. Activities include video showings or just informal discussions on current affairs. These are carried out at the workshops.

Stimulating thought about social issues: We believe that it is important to develop conceptual frameworks of thinking about important issues that will hopefully lead to an active interest in them. Workshops focused on debate and discussion on issues faced by these students in their communities are a primary tool. In addition, their active participation as volunteers at Nalamdana in field health work or in individual projects in their own communities is encouraged. Some Nalamdana scholars are presently involved in efforts to tutor younger children in their neighborhood and act as advocates for keeping girls in school through talking to their parents.

Offering career counseling: The ability of these students to make an active contribution back to their society is intrinsically tied to their own success. We offer counseling to the students that are in their final year of high school or in college to help them determine a career path that fits their interests and abilities.

Summer English Training: The majority of Nalamdana Scholars come from Tamil medium schools and speak Tamil at home. Unfortunately however, knowledge of English is extremely important for their future opportunity and success. Most of the schools of higher standard for the 11th and 12th have English instruction and with few exceptions all college education is in English. We hope to provide tuition fees for intensive English training for students in the 10th, 11th and 12th over the summer months to assist them in their effort to attend better schools for the 11th and 12th and eventually go on to college.

7) Connection of this project with other projects run by the organization :

Nalamdana is an organization of a group of very committed people whose ideas and work we hope will stimulate the interest of these students. Many Nalamdana scholars do play an active role in Nalamdana as volunteers.

8) Duration of the project: Ongoing/ Permanent

9) Details of funding requirements/ Amount of money required:

The program was conceived at the end of 1994, one year after Nalamdana began. The initial fundraising and application screening and selection was carried out in 1995. Awards for the 1996-97 academic year were announced at Nalamdana's annual donors event in January 1996.

Actual budget in previous years

<i>Year</i>	<i># Students</i>	<i>Total budget</i>	<i>Comments</i>
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1996-97	16	\$3,000
1997-98	12	\$3,500
1998-99	30	\$7,000

One child dropped out of school due to family pressure in spite of Nalamdana's efforts to prevent it. Three students were dropped for not meeting program criteria. Three students entered college where fees are close to double.

Proposed Budget for 1999 to 2001

<i>Year</i>	<i># Students</i>	<i>Total budget</i>
1999-00	30	\$11,000
2000-01	30	\$11,500
2001-02	50	\$20,000

Nalamdana's goal is to bring the group to 50 and maintain this number for a period of at least five years. Increasing this number will be evaluated at this stage.

10) List expected amounts to be spent by category (e.g. Salary, Supplies, Equipment, Books, etc.):
Planned activities for 1999-2000 and Budget **Estimated Amount**

I.	Application processing and award ceremony	\$ 200
	(includes space & equipment rental, snacks and bus fare reimbursements for students and their families)	
II.	Payment of tuition fees, books, uniforms and bus passes	\$ 5,800
	(for 30 students, includes several in college with lab fees etc.)	
III.	5 Workshops for exposure, debate and discussion	\$ 1,000
	(includes transport, lunch, snacks and material for the students)	
IV.	Volunteering expense reimbursements	\$ 500
	(includes meals and transport)	
V.	Textbooks/ Library Collection	\$ 300
	(includes purchase of major textbooks and bookshelves)	
VI.	Summer English Classes for 10 th –12 th Std. Students	\$ 1,200
VII.	Full time coordinator salary	\$ 2,000
	TOTAL COSTS	\$ 11,000

11) Criteria for:

a) Selection of students for admission.



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Every other year approximately 15 students are selected from over 100 applications. Nalamdana intends to increase the number of students to 50 by 2001 and then maintain this number for a minimum period of five years.

Nalamdana Scholars are selected for a period of one year at a time and reviewed for re-acceptance every subsequent year they are in school or college. Students are pre-screened for economic need and academic ability on the basis of a written application. Those in the economic bracket of less than \$10 per person per month with high first class grades (>70% aggregate marks) are invited for a multi-day screening session that consists of :

- writing an essay that reflects their ambitions and the specific social issues they are most concerned with.
- participating in a group discussion on a subject moderated by trained Nalamdana staff from which we can evaluate the strength of their convictions and their ability to voice opinions.
- demonstrating their public speaking ability by singing, telling a joke, miming or simply talking about a topic of interest in front of the entire group
- a one on one interview to better understand their motivations

b) Graduation from the school.

Nalamdana scholars attend various schools and follow their school's requirements for graduation. Typically this is the Tamil Nadu state board exams, although some students are in Central Board (CBSE) schools.

12) Scope for further education/vocation of students after graduation:

Most Nalamdana scholars we hope will go on to attend college. They are encouraged to do so and assisted in their effort to identify college opportunities. Three Nalamdana Scholars that joined the program in 1996 in the 11th grade have now completed their first years in college – two in computer science and one in dentistry. One has gone to vocational training to do a diploma in secretarial training. This is a tremendous leap for these students as the highest level of education among the parents of Nalamdana scholars is 10th grade.

We hope that Nalamdana scholars will go on to have strong opportunities in their chosen professions. We expect that some Nalamdana scholars will become professionals – doctors, engineers etc., and others will enter 'white collar' professions beginning as secretarial or low level managerial staff. As they have been selected for their superior ability and leadership we expect that many will rise quickly. We hope that eventually, with their personal success they will dedicate some energy to public service, in their local communities.

13) Current Short Term Program Successes:



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1. Three Nalamdana Scholars admitted to the program in 1996 have entered college.
2. J. Dhanalakshmi has topped her class in I year Diploma computer science
3. S. Dhanalakshmi obtained the highest marks in the 10th Std. S.S.L.C. exams in North Chennai district.
4. L.S. Ameer has become an integral part of Nalamdana, volunteering as a field health worker with Nalamdana 72 days during the 1997-98 academic year and still maintaining a class average of 77% in his B.Sc. Computer Science Program.