

CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Thiruvananthapuram

PhD in Economics

PhD Special Drive Admission for Candidates Belonging to Scheduled Caste (SC) Category – 2026–27

PROSPECTUS

The Centre for Development Studies (CDS) invites applications exclusively from candidates belonging to the Scheduled Caste (SC) category for admission to its PhD programme in Economics under the Special Drive Admission for the academic year 2026–27. Candidates having a postgraduate or equivalent degree in any discipline and satisfying the prescribed eligibility requirements may apply. Candidates must also satisfy the applicable UGC requirements relating to qualification in the UGC-NET examination for PhD admission.

The focus of the programme is on applied economics and researchers are exposed to diverse theoretical frameworks and research methodologies. The degree is awarded by Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. CDS is also a recognised centre for the PhD research of the University of Kerala.

Admission to the programme and its conduct will be according to the prevailing rules and regulations of the University Grants Commission (UGC), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), and other applicable regulations.

1 About CDS

CDS is an autonomous research centre sponsored by the Government of Kerala and the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). CDS was set up at Thiruvananthapuram under the intellectual leadership of Prof. K.N. Raj in 1970 with the mission of promoting research, teaching, and training in disciplines relevant to development. The Centre is internationally known for its applied economic research relevant for development. CDS has been running two regular academic programmes, MA Applied Economics and PhD in Economics. It has one of the finest libraries in Economics and development subjects in the country. The CDS library has a total collection of over 1,60,000 titles in print and eBook formats. The library also provides access to more than 15,000 e-

journals. The Centre subscribes to all leading econometric and statistical software. The campus, including hostels, is Wi-Fi enabled.

2 About the Programme

The PhD programme in CDS was launched in 1975 and so far 131 scholars have been awarded the PhD degree. The programme has a strong orientation towards development with a core focus on economic aspects. PhD research topics are usually aligned with the research interest and expertise of CDS faculty members. **Applicants are advised to go through the research profiles of current faculty members and PhD supervision vacancies (see www.cds.edu).** Broadly, the research interests and expertise of current faculty members include macroeconomic issues of the Indian economy, industrial development, international trade, innovation and technological progress, gender and development, migration, poverty, vulnerability and social security, labour and employment, and agriculture and plantations.

3 Duration of the Programme

The programme involves one year of coursework and a dissertation. The coursework, spread over two semesters, comprises courses on economic theory, research methodology, and topics in Indian economy. For the dissertation, scholars have the opportunity to choose topics of research from a diverse set of fields. The PhD programme has a minimum duration of three years and a maximum duration of six years from the date of admission. The minimum residency period is three years.

4 Eligibility

This Special Drive is exclusively open to candidates belonging to the Scheduled Caste (SC) category. Candidates having any one of the following qualifications are eligible to apply:

A 1-year/2-semester master's degree programme after a 4-year/8-semester bachelor's degree programme or a 2-year/4-semester master's degree programme after a 3-year bachelor's degree programme or qualifications declared equivalent to the master's degree by the corresponding statutory regulatory body, with at least 55% marks in aggregate or its equivalent grade in a point scale wherever grading system is followed.

Or equivalent qualification from a foreign educational institution accredited by an assessment and accreditation agency which is approved, recognized or authorized by an authority, established or incorporated under a law in its home country or any other statutory authority in that country to assess, accredit or assure quality and standards of the educational institution.

Provided that a candidate seeking admission after a 4-year/8-semester bachelor's degree programme should have a minimum of 75% marks in aggregate or its equivalent grade on a point scale wherever the grading system is followed.

Candidates who have completed the MPhil programme with at least 55% marks in aggregate or its equivalent grade in a point scale wherever grading system is followed or equivalent qualification from a foreign educational institution accredited by an assessment and accreditation agency which is approved, recognized or authorized by an authority, established or incorporated under a law in its home country or any other statutory authority in that country to assess, accredit or assure quality and standards of educational institutions, shall be eligible for admission to the PhD programme.

A relaxation of 5% marks or its equivalent grade will be applied to those belonging to SC/ST/OBC (non-creamy layer)/Differently-Abled, Economically Weaker Section (EWS) categories. The applicable relaxation provisions are common to all the sections mentioned above.

Those awaiting results of the qualifying degree may also apply. Such candidates, if selected, can join the programme only if their previous institutions certify that they have completed all the requirements for award of degree. In the event that a candidate fails to acquire the relevant degree or the relevant marks/grades stipulated above, they will be automatically removed from the Centre & University.

5 Number of Seats and Reservation

Two (2) seats are available for admission under the Scheduled Caste (SC) category through the PhD Special Drive Admission for the academic year 2026–27.

This Special Drive is exclusively for eligible candidates belonging to the SC category. Candidates belonging to other categories are not eligible to apply under this Special Drive.

6 Admission Process

The admission process is different for UGC-JRF and non-JRF holders. Candidates with fellowships other than UGC-JRF will be considered under the category of non-JRF and the corresponding admission procedure will be applicable.

Candidates with a valid **JRF qualification** can choose to apply through the **non-JRF admission category** instead of the JRF category by selecting the appropriate option in the application form. Their admission will then be processed according to the **non-JRF rules/criteria**.

Admission of JRF holders

In the case of candidates with a valid JRF qualification, admission will be based solely on performance in the interview.

Admission of non-JRF holders

In the case of non-JRF candidates and JRF candidates who apply through non-JRF admission category, admission will be on the basis of the UGC-NET score and interview (with weightage of 70% and 30%, respectively).

Research proposal and interview:

Candidates must submit a research proposal written in English along with their application. The research proposal should not be more than 2000 words. While we encourage candidates to be innovative in approach and presentation, we expect the research proposal to have a critical understanding of the body of knowledge in the proposed area of research and to be specific in terms of study issues and objectives and to demonstrate some understanding of the analytical framework and data. The research proposal should not be a copy of a study presented as part of any other programme. **An application without a research proposal will not be considered.**

The interview focuses on the following:

- The competence of the candidate to undertake the proposed research.
- The suitability of pursuing the proposed research at the Centre.
- The potential of the proposed research to contribute to the relevant literature.

7 Confirmation of Admission

A candidate who has been provisionally admitted to the PhD programme is eligible for confirming his/her admission as a PhD Research Scholar if:

1. The candidate has completed the coursework with a minimum CGPA of 5.0 (4.5 CGPA in the case of candidates belonging to the SC category).
2. The candidate's research proposal has been approved. Candidates admitted to the PhD programme shall have their research proposal approved by the Academic Programmes Committee (APC) of CDS within one year from the date of completion of their coursework. The research

proposal approved by the APC shall be presented before the JNU-CDS Committee of Direction for ratification.

The names of candidates who fail to fulfil the above two conditions will be automatically removed from the rolls of CDS and the University.

8 Fellowships

Students who have already cleared JRF or similar doctoral research fellowship schemes can avail of them for their PhD research in CDS. PhD students in CDS can also apply for the ICSSR doctoral fellowship. ICSSR doctoral fellowships are awarded on the basis of an all-India competition in terms of the quality of the research proposal submitted by the candidate to the ICSSR.

It is important to note that admission to the PhD programme in CDS does not guarantee fellowship.

Therefore, candidates not having cleared any fellowship scheme are advised to have a plan for financing their doctoral research.

9 Internship Opportunities

A few fellowships for doing three-month PhD internships in universities and research institutes in Europe and the UK are available for PhD scholars whose admission has been confirmed. Selection to the internship programme is done through a competitive process.

10 Fees

1. Tuition Fee: Rs. 120/- per semester
2. JNU Registration/Enrolment Fee: Rs. 10,115/- (one-time fee)
3. Miscellaneous Charges: Rs. 500/-

Hostel facility will be given based on availability. All rooms have attached bath and are modestly furnished. The per-person monthly rent for the hostel room is Rs. 500, which includes electricity and water charges. However, in the case of scholars having fellowship with HRA, the monthly hostel rent is equal to the eligible HRA. All hostel residents are attached to the mess and must pay the monthly mess bill in advance within the first five working days of each month. Defaulters are not encouraged to remain in the hostel.

11 How to Apply

The application form in MS Word format will be made available on the CDS website, www.cds.edu. Eligible SC candidates can either directly fill up the Word file or fill up the printout of the form and scan it. The completed application and required documents should be sent as attachments to admissionphd@cds.edu on or before the last date specified below.

The attachments should include the following:

- Filled-up application form
- Research proposal
- UGC Award Letter/Score Card, as applicable

At this stage, there is no need to submit any other certificate and there is no application fee. It is the responsibility of the candidates to ensure that all relevant details are correctly entered. The veracity of these details will be checked later and candidates should be able to submit the relevant documents when required. Applications that are found to be incomplete or contain incorrect information will be rejected without notice.

12 Jurisdiction Clause

Any disputes arising in connection with the admission process shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Kerala High Court. The Centre for Development Studies (CDS) reserves the right to modify, amend, add to, delete, or otherwise alter any provision of this prospectus, including the admission process, eligibility criteria, number of seats, dates, fees, or other related conditions, as may be deemed necessary by the Centre from time to time. Any such modification, amendment, addition or deletion shall be binding on all applicants and candidates.

13 Important Dates

Last date for submitting application	30.08.2026; 5 p.m.
Date of online interview	02.09.2026

Candidates are advised to keep checking the CDS website for the latest updates on admission-related matters.

For any queries or additional information, please contact the Academic Programme Office on Tel: 0471 2774253/4 during office hours (9 AM to 5 PM) or write to admissionphd@cds.edu.