**12. Is there any specific format for LOR?**

The LOR can be written by a Professor of the college or university where the candidate is studying OR the Employer, in case the applicant is / was working. The LOR should be addressed to “The Trustees of the J. N. Tata Endowment” on their respective letter heads with full address, telephone and mobile number. Alternately, it may be sent from their official mail ID. Please note that LOR sent from personal mail ID will not be considered.

### 09. Can the application be filled in online?

No, candidates have to download the application, fill it offline and submit it from the same email-id which is mentioned in the application form, along with a scanned copy of the letter of recommendation (LOR). Applications should not be sent by post.

### 06. Is there any gift awards also?

Yes, the selected scholars may also qualify for a gift scholarship and travel assistance from our allied Trusts as may be decided at the sole discretion of the Trustees of the concerned Trusts. A gift scholarship can be for a maximum amount of Rs. 10,00,000/- and the travel grant can be a maximum of Rs. 50,000/-.

### 05. What is the maximum loan amount you offer?

The amount awarded as the loan scholarship ranges between **Rs. 1,50,000/-** and **Rs. 6,00,000/-**. All applicants do not necessarily qualify for the maximum amount.

### 04. What is the loan scholarship?

The scholarship is at a simple interest of 2% per annum. However, if students repay within the specified time period (between the end of 4th and 7th year), the Trustees may waive the interest.

**02. What is the eligibility for the Loan Scholarships?**

To be eligible for the Loan Scholarship an applicant must:

* Be an Indian national
* Be below 45 years of age
* Have a graduate degree from a recognised Indian university
* Could be in the final year of graduation or awaiting results
* Have secured admission or awaiting admission to pursue Master’s / PhD / Postdoctoral fellowships / Research fellowships.

# Statement Of Purpose Guide

Many candidates have told us they experienced difficulties in drafting an effective SoP. Since it forms a crucial part of the JN Tata Endowment Scholarship process, we decided to provide you with some guidelines, some from JN Tata Scholars and some culled out from some universities. Reading this will help you a great deal when you start drafting you statement of purpose to be sent to The JN Tata Endowment.

## Be Clear

A statement of purpose is a statement of intent. What makes you *you*. What makes you think a space is for you. Why does it matter now. What value-add do you bring to the table.

I've had the good fortune to have mentored many students in the course of my young life. A question I often receive from them is what goes into creating a good statement. Having fielded this question a number of times, I can now say with confidence – it is clarity. The clearer a statement of purpose is, the more sure you can be that your point is being driven home. This is especially vital, as assessors are often going through a stack of applications under time pressures. Let’s make their job easier and more pleasurable!

How does one write a 'good' statement? Good being a relative term, but in the sense of how one writes a high quality statement of purpose… A quality statement can only be written when one’s intent for application at that particular juncture is clear. Following this, how to get the ball rolling? Jotting down a few key points on paper, either in running format or in a diagrammatic representation, is a good way to get started. Keep it short. Keep it simple.

Once you have a skeleton of sorts before you on paper, you have the raw ingredients to make the meal of your dreams! The key factor for this is that the timing and sequence of the ingredients should be just right. You can choose to then create a grouping of information by way or some kind of logic or order. This may follow, for example, academic or professional progressions, or it may be grouped according to a cross-cutting thematic area that you wish to highlight in your statement. The idea in the statement is to lead your reader through your thought process. They need to come away with a clarity of understanding regarding your intent, why now, why you, and critically how you can make that difference. This is the formula that worked for me! I will add that there is no one magic fix; each person has their own style and way with words. Be creative, but be yourself! That’s what makes you special, and that’s the value-added you can bring to any space.

There are a few words of caution. A statement that is too long runs the risk of meandering too far from the main stream of thought. You can lose your reader with an information overdose. A statement is also not the place to list every single achievement you’ve ever had. Be selective and exercise your own judgement regarding the main competencies and skills you wish to highlight. You can share more of your gold stars in your résumé which is a place better suited for this purpose.

Remember, the start and close of your statement of purpose are critical. They are the impressions with which you first open and then finally leave the assessor with. Consider it a handshake; you want it to be firm and sure – it needs the right balance! The body holds it all together.

The paper starts off as being blank. You populate it with your signature.

- Ria Sen, JN Tata Scholar

## Be Genuine

There are 2 elements I believe that add to a great and convincing statement of purpose. These points are applicable when you are applying for scholarships as well as post graduate studies.

1. Your genuine reason for the interest in the field you will be specializing in and,  
2. Your reason to select a particular college/university

The best SOPs have always been the most genuine and honest statements that not only talk about the applicants interest in what he/she would hope to study but also an understanding of its applicability in the near future, either in one’s own country or globally. It's also important to mention how one may have trained oneself over the past few years for specializing in the field- either through reading landmark books about it, following the work of noted academicians in the field, taking up extra courses besides academic work, internships, inspiration from family in the field etc.

- Mishkat Ahmed, JN Tata Scholar

## Be Clear, Precise And Explain

The Princeton Review notes that "Admissions committees look for candidates with clear, well-defined research interests that arise from experience. With that in mind, your statement should reveal that you care deeply about your chosen discipline and that you have the background to support your ideas and sentiments. It should also demonstrate that you're a diligent student who will remain committed for the long haul. Always answer the question asked of you. Being substantive and direct is much better than being creative or flashy".[(http://www.princetonreview.com/grad-school-advice/statement-of-purpose)](http://www.princetonreview.com/grad-school-advice/statement-of-purpose)

Our experience shows that many students waste a lot of time in coming to the point, spending a little too much time on biographical details, some talking about their ambitions since adolescence. These not only distract from the basic objective but also leave a bad impression on the reader. While you may wish to demonstrate that your chosen area is a logical outcome of your interests and desires over the years, express it concise manner.What matters to decision-makers is to gauge whether candidates have the ability to do what they wish to do. You should therefore focus your writing efforts on creating this confidence.

The University of Berkeley suggests that students understand a Statement of Purpose as a "composition with four different parts.

**Part 1:** Introduce yourself, your interests and motivations

**Part 2:** Summarize your undergraduate and previous graduate career

**Part 3:** Discuss the relevance of your recent and current activities

**Part 4:** Elaborate on your academic interests."  
[(http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/statement-purpose/)](http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/statement-purpose/)

We have seen many hastily-written SoPs. Often students’ excuse is that they did not have the time but this is completely unprofessional. The SoP is an important statement and you have to find the time to produce a good statement. It is naïve to expect that you can produce a good statement in one draft. Purdue University recommends that "You can use several exercises to write down some preliminary thoughts in a non-linear fashion before you start drafting: for example, prewriting to get your ideas flowing; sketching out a preliminary outline; or, you can also use a number of other invention strategies such as: brainstorming, freewriting, clustering, or asking questions to help you get your thoughts on paper".   
[(https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/969/01/)](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/969/01/)

### Be Prepared

1) An academic tip, I discovered the hard way. Unlike Indian universities, study abroad involves substantial course reading prior to the scheduled lectures. While you might assume that Week 1 reading is to be completed after you attend the 1st lecture, it is in fact meant to be finished before you step into the classroom for the first time. It might thus be a good idea to go through the reading lists & finish off your Week 1 readings while you are having a fun time at all the orientations. The first few weeks can otherwise be rather grueling.

2) Once you have your timetable for the university, you might find that some of the courses you were hoping to take clash with another. Many universities allow you to "audit" courses (sit in on classes from other departments that you're not going to be graded on). A good way to explore your diverse interests (without giving exams!)

3) It is always a good idea to seek out alumni from the university you are visiting. Share a cup of coffee and feel free to bounce of all your doubts (even if seemingly stupid). Most of the alumni have been through the same concerns and will be happy to put yours at rest.

4) Many universities have Facebook pages for new students of a particular batch. Always a useful resource if you want to find fellow students from your country who are also travelling to the same university/city.

5) Most universities are extremely accessible via email. Don't hesitate to send them any concerns about scholarship opportunities, course details etc. Often professors themselves make time out to answer these queries.

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