

Way Forward: Rethinking ISKCON's Culture on the Service of Guru

The policies described below will be applied to all newly authorized initiating gurus within ISKCON. Present initiating gurus are encouraged to also subscribe to what is described below.

The most important consideration

1. The most important consideration is that before any new devotees, male or female are “authorized” to give initiation, the role of the diksa guru in ISKCON has to be consistent with the instructions of Srila Prabhupada.
2. Some of the instructions of Srila Prabhupada are listed below. A-C

A. Initiation in ISKCON Connects Us with Srila Prabhupada and the Previous Acharyas:

3. Initiation is to be understood as an important part of the process of connecting a disciple with Srila Prabhupada and the previous acaryas in our disciplic succession.
4. The primary role of the diksa and siksa gurus is to connect their disciples and students with the teachings of Srila Prabhupada, who is the Founder-Acarya of ISKCON. Disciples and students are expected to serve the instructions of their gurus, in accordance with the teachings of Srila Prabhupada, whose Last Will and Testament instructed members of ISKCON to serve under the managerial authority structure he created.

B. The Need for Cooperation Between ISKCON Leaders

5. A bona fide Guru in ISKCON will naturally give instructions that are in harmony and in cooperation with the instructions of the ISKCON authorities that Srila Prabhupada authorized to manage his society.
6. ISKCON representatives in other leadership roles should also cooperatively support the siksa and diksa gurus in ISKCON in their services of caring for, and preaching to, disciples.

C. Daksina/Donations Collected by Representatives of ISKCON (See NoI purport 5)

7. All daksina/donations given to representatives of ISKCON, including diksa and siksa gurus, should be considered the property of ISKCON. As such, funds collected should be utilized to forward the mission of the society in transparent and accountable ways.
8. All donations collected by representatives of ISKCON should be accounted for appropriately and used under the direction of ISKCON authorities, and authorized ISKCON projects.

Qualification for Vaishnavis to Initiate

1. While taking into consideration varnashrama factors, such as Vaishnavis considered qualified to give initiation should be under the protection of a husband, father, or grown-up son; otherwise, the qualification to give initiation in ISKCON is not based on gender.
2. Any decision about Vaishnavis giving initiation the policies are considered preliminary and will be reviewed after 3 years.
3. Not all members of the Guru Services Committees agreed on the following: Over the next 3 years, a male guru who is an authorized diksa guru, shall give 2nd initiation to the women devotees initiated by a Vaishnavi who is authorized to give 1st initiation.

Optional Application the Above Section

4. ISKCON regions may opt out of the section “Qualification to Initiate”.