

KIRAN scheme of DST lights up S&T paths of thousands of women scientists

More than 2200 women scientists & technologists have benefitted from the Women Scientists Scheme, including WOS-A, WOS-B, and WOS-C in the last five years, including the current year. Women ranging in the age group 27 to 57 years receive fellowship support ranging from Rs 25000 to 55000 for different categories under Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing (KIRAN)' Scheme for continuing higher education in Science and Technology after a break in career.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) is implementing 'Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing (KIRAN)' Scheme to provide various career opportunities to women scientists and technologists. It is primarily aimed to bring gender parity in the Science & Technology sector by inducting more women talent in the research & development domain through various programmes. Women Scientists Scheme (WOS) of the Department under the KIRAN scheme, including other schemes, empowers women in science and technology. Many of the women who have completed the scheme have initiated into successful careers in science, technology, and in patents.

The 'Women Scientist Scheme' provides career opportunities to unemployed women scientists and technologists, especially those who had break in career, for pursuing research in frontier areas of Science and Engineering. There are three major components of the Women Scientist Scheme, namely, WOS-A, WOS-B, WOS-C.

The WOS-A scheme provides a platform to women scientists and technologists for pursuing research in basic or applied sciences and offers the opportunity to work as bench-level scientists. This scheme plays a pivotal role in gender mainstreaming as it not only prevents brain drain from the S&T system but also trains and retain women in the system. The support available in five disciplines under WOS-A are namely, Physical & Mathematical Sciences (PMS), Chemical Sciences (CS), Life Sciences (LS), Earth & Atmospheric Sciences (EAS), and Engineering Technology (ET).

The WOS-B scheme focuses on projects related to Science & Technology (S&T) interventions for societal benefit. This scheme provides an opportunity for women scientists to address a well-identified societal challenge and deliver possible solutions by way of development of viable technology/technique and/or lab-to-land technology transfer, its adaptation and scaling up. The projects under WOS-B cover three major sectors viz. Agriculture and Allied Sciences (AAS), Health Food and Nutrition (HFN), and Engineering and Technology Development (ETD).

The WOS-C scheme aims to train women having qualifications in science/engineering/medicine or allied areas in the field of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) and their management for a period of one year in order to develop a pool of women scientists geared to creating, protecting and managing intellectual property in India.

DST has received a huge response by inviting proposals from the scheme, and the interest in it is increasing. The completion of the scheme is leading to promising careers for women in science.