

Women scientists receive international exposure through Indo-U.S. Fellowship for WISTEMM

The Indo-U.S. Fellowship for Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (WISTEMM) program of Department of Science and Technology (DST) in association with Indo-U.S. Science & Technology Forum (IUSSTF) have provided international exposure to several women scientists. Around 20 women scientists have visited 20 leading institutions across the United States of America for furthering their research work and to get trained in the state of the art technologies related to their research.

WISTEMM aims to provide opportunities to Indian Women Scientists, Engineers & Technologists to undertake international collaborative research in premier institutions in U.S.A, to enhance their research capacities and capabilities.

The programme is run for two categories of women scientists--- Women Overseas Student Internship (Module I) for women students pursuing PhD, and Women Overseas Fellowship (Module II) for women with PhD degree and holding regular position at any recognized institution/laboratory in India.

The first batch of women scientists comprising of 20 women has completed their visit to 20 leading institutions across the United States of America. Selected from among the application from the women scientific community, second batch of 20 women is undergoing visit across premier institutions of USA this year.

The fellowship is for bright Indian women Citizen within the age bracket of 21 to 45 years. Such a broad age criteria not only caters to those who are currently pursuing research but also to those outstanding women researchers who would want to return after having taken a break onto their research path. The funding support extended under the program includes stipend, airfare, health insurance, contingency and conference allowances.

DST has started several pioneering initiatives for promoting women in science. In the year 2014, DST restructured all women specific programmes under one umbrella called Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing (KIRAN), which encompasses women-exclusive schemes and encourages them to foster their career by not only undertaking research in Science and Technology (S&T) but also focusing on S&T solutions of issues & challenges at the grassroots level for social benefits. The mandate of KIRAN Program is to bring gender parity in S&T through gender mainstreaming. Women Scientist Scheme (WOS) addresses challenges faced by S&T qualified women primarily due to social responsibilities. Its two components WOS-A and WOS-B are directly implemented by KIRAN Division and the third component WOS-C or KIRAN-IPR is implemented by TIFAC with grant-in-aid from DST.

Providing avenues to women scientists and technologists for capacity building, knowledge and skill enhancement at global level is another objective achieved through its international component called 'International Fellowship for Women in Science'. The aim of the program is to provide opportunities to Indian Women Scientists, Engineers and Technologists to undertake collaborative research and gain exposure to excellent research facilities at international level.