

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2425
TO BE ANSWERED ON 15.3.2023**

WISE-KIRAN

2425. MS. S. JOTHIMANI:

Will the Minister of **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY** विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the steps that the Government has taken to encourage and support women in setting up their own startups/companies in the field of science and technology;

(b) the year-wise details of the amount spent on the WISE-KIRAN (Women in Science and Engineering- KIRAN) scheme in the State of Tamil Nadu, along with the number of beneficiaries (especially from the Karur constituency) since the Scheme's inception;

(c) the details of the steps the Government has taken to promote science and technology among children (especially among young girls in rural areas) at the school level, and the year-wise expenditure of the Ministry and its other Offices on such activities during last four years; and

(d) the details of the financial support that the Government has provided to women who desire to pursue graduate and postgraduate studies in the fields of science and technology, along with the budgetary allocation towards such schemes/activities?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR THE
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES
(DR. JITENDRA SINGH)**

विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी तथा पृथ्वी विज्ञान मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (स्वतंत्र प्रभार)
(डॉ. जितेंद्र सिंह)

(a) The Department of Science and Technology (DST) is conducting a training programme 'Women Entrepreneurship Development Programme (WEDP)' that aims to motivate and encourage potential women entrepreneurs. In addition to this, women led startups and innovators are also encouraged to apply and seek support for entrepreneurship including the tech led entrepreneurship

under various components of National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations (NIDHI) programme. Further, BIRAC (Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council) has supported a network of 3 Bioincubation and preincubation centres dedicated for women led startups only and provide incubation space and mentoring (business, IP, legal) specifically to women students/scientists/entrepreneurs. Moreover, Biotech Ignition Grant (BIG) scheme of BIRAC provides grant-in-aid to individual entrepreneurs and start-ups. Out of total projects supported under this programme, 25% projects are led by women founders. BIRAC also operates women focused entrepreneurship award, called WInER Award fellowship (Women In Entrepreneurial Research), in partnership with TiE-Delhi NCR.

(b) The year-wise details of the amount spent on the WISE-KIRAN (Women in Science and Engineering – KIRAN) scheme in the State of Tamil Nadu, along with the number of beneficiaries in last five years are mentioned below:

Sl. No.	Financial Year	No. of Beneficiaries	Amount spent (in crores)
1.	2018-19	43	6.35
2.	2019-20	55	5.00
3.	2020-21	84	7.82
4.	2021-22	59	3.98
5.	2022-23	38	3.51
	TOTAL	279	26.66

(c) The Department of Science and Technology has started Vigyan Jyoti Programme in 2019-20 to motivate meritorious girl students of Class 9-12 to pursue higher education and career in STEM (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) particularly in the areas where women are underrepresented. Vigyan Jyoti Programme is implemented by Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti through Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas which are mostly located in rural settings. The Programme is in implementation in 200 districts of the country and more than 30000 girls have been benefitted through various interventions, since the inception. Various year-round activities including counselling of students-parents, career counselling, special lectures/classes, curriculum-based STEM sessions, coding sessions, science camps, tinkering activities, visits to Knowledge Partners (KP)/Industry/Lab, interaction with role models, etc. Some special workshops on latest technologies have also been conducted for Vigyan Jyoti Scholars.

DST is also implementing a national program INSPIRE MANAK (Million Minds Augmenting National Aspiration and Knowledge) aims to attract young students to study science and pursue research career and to promote creative thinking and foster a culture of innovation among them. The Programme intends to target young students, including young girls in rural areas studying in class VI to X. Under INSPIRE MANAK scheme, one lakh ideas are being shortlisted for a financial assistance of Rs. 10000/- each, directly into the bank accounts of the students through Direct Benefit Transfer for preparation of project/model/showcasing of idea. After a series of District Level and State level exhibitions, the top 60 innovations are selected from National Level Exhibition for whom incubation support will be provided and also will be protected for Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).

Financial Year	Expenditure (in Crores)
2019-20	58.43
2020-21	60.56
2021-22	76.10
2022-23	47.32 (till date)

(d) There is no dedicated programme to provide support to women who desire to pursue graduate and postgraduate studies in the fields of science & Technology. However, ‘Scholarship for Higher Education (SHE)’ component of ‘Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE)’ Programme aims to enhance rates of attachment of talented youth to undertake higher education in science intensive programmes, by providing scholarships and mentorship to both girls and boys. The scheme offers 10,000 Scholarship every year at Rs 0.80 lakh per year for the talented youth in the age group 17-22 years, for undertaking Bachelors and Masters level education in natural sciences.
