

[Announcements](#)

DST collaborates with IBM to build STEM career opportunities for girl students

The current Vigyan Jyoti Programme in 58 districts will be strengthened and expanded to promote STEM among girls

Interactive learning platform 'Engage With Science' to be built on top of the India Science OTT Channel platform to attract school students to consume more science video content from India Science

New Delhi/ Bangalore, 09 October 2020 : The Department of Science & Technology (DST) and IBM India today announced two collaborations, both aimed at promoting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) learning among students and to inspire them towards STEM careers. The first collaboration involves the DST's Vigyan Jyoti programme, which aims at creating a level-playing field for meritorious girls from grade 9 to 12 to pursue STEM in their higher education. The second collaboration is with Vigyan Prasar, an autonomous organization of DST, which will build and run 'Engage With Science' – a technology-driven interactivity platform, which shall work in tandem with the India Science OTT channel. Engage With Science will aim at creating excitement and involvement among school students through tools like gamification and help increase consumption of science and technology content from India Science and make STEM look aspirational for their future careers.

"It's a historic moment as DST and IBM start a unique Public-Private Partnership model on two different programmes - STEM Learning for Girls and Engage With Science. IBM is one of the companies that bring a positive disruption to the industry. This partnership will leverage technology to reach out to students and give them an experience of interactive learning. The new learning platform will supplement classroom teaching and help students in deriving insights from it and implementing them to solve real-world problems. It will also help address the learning needs of both students and teachers in this post-Covid19 scenario. The programmes will also give an opportunity for rural students to help understand and plan their journey from school to college, do research and build a career of choice in the field of science and technology. We hope to see at least 1/3rd representation of women in the top technology schools of the country 5 years from now and eventually increasing the participation of girl students in our programme to at least 50,000." said **Prof Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Govt of India.**

The Vigyan Jyoti programme was launched by DST in 2019 to inspire girl students to pursue higher education and career in STEM fields. The program provides a scholarship, visit to nearby scientific institutions, science camps, lectures from eminent women scientists and career counselling. The program is currently implemented by Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) in 58 districts with participation of about 2900 students. The partnership with IBM India will strengthen the current activities and expanded to include more schools in future. Furthermore, the women tech experts working at IBM India will also interact and be a role model for inspiring girl students to plan for a career in STEM under the program. This will strengthen the Department of Science and Technology's initiative to increase the number of women in technology fields.

Sandip Patel, MD, IBM India/South Asia said, *"India leads in providing the world with top-class scientist and engineers, but the percentage of women in that segment is still small. It's the need of the hour to promote gender diversity in STEM education and to create new avenues for cultivating diverse talent. The collaboration with DST will expand our STEM program to girl students pursuing 10+2 courses. It's a testimony of IBM's*

commitment to putting Good Tech in action and support the government achieve its vision of a Skilled India and Aatmanirbhar Bharat.”

DST and IBM India aim to create a robust STEM ecosystem that nurtures critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and next-generation innovators through [Inspire Awards-MANAK](#) (Million Minds Augmenting National Aspirations and Knowledge) – a program targeting to build one million ideas rooted in science from school students. DST and IBM India will work together to further integrate and develop Science & Technology in the education ecosystem with short term courses, workshops, mentoring, and online science content communication for teachers and students in India.

In another collaboration launched alongside, IBM will work with [Vigyan Prasar](#) – an autonomous body under the DST to help India’s science popularization agenda through several strategic initiatives, including ‘Engage With Science’. This is an interactive platform that will be built on top of the India Science Over-The-Top (OTT) platform to encourage and inspire high school students to pursue Science & Technology (S&T) for a career. As part of the collaboration, IBM will run the day-to-day activities of the program, including student workshops, seminars and leverage its expertise to mentor the students. The platform will make students interact, participate and get involved with the sampling and active consumption of S&T content, including Cloud, Big Data, etc. through usage of gamification tools and AI/ML components.

‘Engage With Science’ will actively engage with schools, shoot interactive programmes in the school premises, provide windows of recognition and glorification to select teachers of S&T subjects. The programmes, when aired on India Science channel, shall, in turn, create a fan following and community creation around teachers and schools.

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For further information: Arun Kumar | arun.kumarm@in.ibm.com
