Seminar on
"WiS: A Career in Science"
5 April 2008
Venue : SMS Auditorium, Cochin University of Science and Technology, Cochin: 682 022

Background
Women in science comprise only a small percentage of the total number of working women in India. Although there is no explicit discrimination against women in areas like research and recruitment at the college, university or faculty levels, attitudinal biases and a feeling of support from institutional/social structures have, over the years, operated as powerful forces against talented women realising their full potential in the pursuit of productive and rewarding careers in science. It does not appear that there is a societal perception in India of women being incapable of intellectual attainment in science since women students are not in short supply at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in science. Many of these university students do brilliantly and are gold medalists. Many of them also enter Ph.D programs. However, their numbers drop in faculty positions, and drop even more in higher faculty positions, in selection committees, and so on. The under-representation of women in science, particularly at the senior levels of teaching and research in India, has become a serious cause of concern for women scientists and science policy planners.

There is an overwhelming body of empirical and qualitative evidence for this "leaky pipeline in science, as well as presence of gender inequality in the practice of science. There is a need to make women aware of a career in science as a possible career option and then to retain them in the profession. It is becoming increasingly evident that if we want more women to be successful in science we need to create, at all levels, support structures for and positive attitudes about a science career for women. The pressure for change has to come from within the scientific community, not just from women but from all those who believe that the practice of science cannot be built on a foundation of inequality.

Objectives
The aims of the seminar are as follows:
1. To have presentations by leading women scientists about latest developments in their area of activity, to showcase the work done by women scientists, to an audience of both genders.
2. To inspire and motivate young women to take up a career in Science.
3. To create an awareness on various career options available to young women scientists.
4. To explore avenues for entrepreneurship development for women scientists.

This is part of the role model program of the WiS Panel of the Indian Academy of Sciences (http://www.ias.ac.in/womensscience/). By holding the Seminar in Cochin University, we hope to target graduate and undergraduate students, research scholars, teachers and scientists in Kerala and inspire more young women to take up a career in science.

Speakers
April 5th, 2008 (Saturday)
08.00AM - 09.30AM

09.30AM - 10.00AM - INAUGURATION
Dr. Mythily Ramaswamy
TIFR Centre, IISc Campus,
Bangalore

11.10AM - 11.55AM -
Dr. Aruna Dhathathreyan
Chemical Laboratory, CLRI,
Adyar, Chennai

12.05PM - 12.50PM -
Dr. Usha Vijayraghavan
Department of Microbiology and Cell biology,
IISc, Bangalore

01.00PM - 02.00PM - LUNCH Break

02.00PM - 02.45 PM -
Dr. Rama Govindarajan
Engineering Mechanics Unit, JNCASR,
Jakkur, Bangalore

02.55PM - 03.40 PM -
Dr. Neelima Gupte
Department of Physics, IIT, Madras

03.50PM - 04.35PM -
Dr. Geetha Ramkumar
Space Physics Laboratory,
VSSC, Trivandrum

04.45PM - 05.45PM - Panel discussion
Moderator: Prof. Rohini Godbole
Centre for High Energy Physics
IISc, Bangalore

Members:
Prof. Archana Bhattacharyya
Director, Indian Institute of Geomagnetism
Naval Mumbai

Prof. K.K. Nair
Director, Science in Society
CUSAT

Prof. A. Vijaykumar
Department of Mathematics
CUSAT

Registration
There is no registration fee. However, participants are requested to fill up the attached registration form and submit it to the co-ordinator before 1 April 2008. Registration could also be done by sending an e-mail to the co-ordinator with the relevant information.

Address for Communication
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Organizing Committee
Patron: Prog. Gangan Pratap, Vice-Chancellor, CUSAT
Convenor: Prof. Rohini Godbole, Chair, Women in Science (WiS)
Panel of the Indian Academy of Sciences

Co-ordinators:
Dr. Padma Namboodiri (Biotechnology)
Dr. Sarita G. Bhat (Biotechnology)

Members:
Dr. A. Vijaykumar (Mathematics)
Dr. K.G. Nair (Science in Society)
Dr. M.Chandrasekaran (Biotechnology)
Dr. K.K. Elayaani (Biotechnology)
Dr. Rani Joseph (Polymer Chemistry)
Dr. C.S. Paulose (Biotechnology)
Dr. Asha Gopalan (Statistics)
Dr. Ammini Joseph (Environmental Science)
Dr. B. Lakshmi (Mathematics)
Dr. Mariamma Vincent (Culture and Heritage)
Dr. N.G. Devendran (Languages)

Panel on "Women in Science (WiS)" Indian Academy of Sciences, Bangalore
and
Cochin University of Science and Technology

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