

## **Review of National Awards for Women's Development through Application of Science & Technology”**

The participation of women in the field of science and technology has seen progress over the years, yet challenges persist, hindering optimal gender diversity. Historically, societal stereotypes and biases have discouraged girls from pursuing STEM education and careers. Although there's a growing recognition of the importance of diversity, women are still underrepresented in many STEM disciplines, efforts to address this issue include initiatives aimed at encouraging girls to pursue STEM education, mentorship programs, and creating inclusive workplace environments. Recognizing and addressing unconscious biases can contribute significantly to fostering an environment where women feel empowered to contribute their skills and perspectives to science and technology. as society continues to acknowledge the importance of diversity in driving innovation, ongoing commitment to dismantling barriers and creating a more inclusive landscape for women in science and technology is essential for realizing the full potential of talent across genders.

The government has instituted various awards dedicated to women and individuals working for the development of women. These accolades aim to not only provide recognition but also to uplift the socio-economic status of women, enhance career opportunities, and serve as a source of motivation and inspiration for others to actively contribute to women's empowerment.

To improve the livelihood of women, the government has come up with various programmes, schemes, and awards, especially for women. DST also supports various projects that help S&T professionals and institutions who are working on projects related to the empowerment of women. The government also instituted many awards who are working for the upliftment of women to provide recognition, improve socio-economic status, enhance career opportunities, motivate/inspire others to work for women's recognition and development. It has also helped the individuals to achieve their goal /urge and contribute to the development of society.

**There are some programmes also exclusively available for the benefit of women.**

- ✓ Women in Science and Engineering KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN)
- ✓ WISE Post-Doctoral Fellowship (WISE-PDF)
- ✓ Consolidation of University Research for Innovation & Excellence in Women (CURIE)
- ✓ INSPIRE-SHE (Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research – Scholarship for Higher Education):
- ✓ GATI (Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions)
- ✓ Women Involvement in Science and Engineering Research (WISER)
- ✓ Vigyan Jyoti Scheme
- ✓ Women Technology Parks (WTP)

**In the relentless pursuit of gender equality and empowerment, the Indian government has instituted a constellation of national awards designed to celebrate and uplift women which are as follows:**

- ✓ Nari Shakti Awards: A Celebration of Women's Excellence
- ✓ Women Icons Leading Swachhata (WINS) Awards 2023: Recognizing Cleanliness Champions
- ✓ Women Transforming India Awards: Nurturing Exemplary Women Entrepreneurs
- ✓ National Tech Excellence Award for Women 2022: Honoring Innovation Pioneers

Within this framework, the Science for Equity, Empowerment, and Development (SEED) division of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) has taken a proactive action by initiating and implementing programs that leverage Science and Technology (S&T) interventions for the socio-economic upliftment of marginalized sections of society, with a particular emphasis on women.

The "**National Award for Women's Development through Application of Science and Technology**," instituted by the Science for Equity Empowerment and Development (SEED) division of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), stands as a distinguished tribute to those individuals and institutions dedicated to grassroots-level work in advancing women's development through the application of science and technology (S&T). Established in 1999, under the visionary guidance of the then Hon'ble Minister of Science & Technology.

The Technology Information, Forecasting, and Assessment Council (TIFAC) under the aegis of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) serves as a dynamic catalyst for technological innovation and development in India. TIFAC has been entrusted with the responsibility of reviewing the "National Award for Women's Development through Application of Science and Technology".

For this review we have drafted a framework and methodology of study and it includes

- ✓ Data Collection
- ✓ Interaction with previous years awardees(online & offline)
- ✓ Interaction with Trainees and On-Site Visit
- ✓ Brainstorming sessions
- ✓ Regional Workshops
- ✓ Questionnaire(through google forms)
- ✓ Conclusion and report making.

The objective of the study mainly focused on examining the impact of the award and to highlight the issues such as lesser visibility, lesser no. of nominations, accordingly changes in the guidelines and to understand whether to continue this award or not?

Questionnaire(awardee and Non awardee) is enclosed for you perusal.