



IIT MADRAS



WOMEN LEADING IITM QUARTERLY REPORT 2021- 2022

WOMEN LEADING IITM (WLI)

Women are the heart and soul of the world. A nation's progress is marked by the progress of its women. This is what IIT Madras has been doing since the beginning to empower women. Ms. Mira Ziaudin joined IITM as the first female faculty in 1962. In 1968, Ms. M. A. Vedavalli became the first female graduate from IITM receiving her B.Tech. in Electrical Engineering degree from Dr. Vikram A. Sarabhai. Since then, it was been a parade of firsts, the first women's hostel – Sarayu came up in 1967, Dr. Usha Titus became the first female Registrar in 2003, Prof. Kamala Krithivasan became the first woman to head a department at IIT Madras in 1992, Prof. Ligy Philip took over as the first female Dean in 2017, and the list goes on.

Recognizing the importance of women in society and the various challenges they have to often overcome, IIT Madras has started Women Leading IITM to recruit-secure-promote-nurture-support women. The priorities of this initiative are to fund late-year Ph.D. students, come up with innovative projects to address obstacles facing career growth, offer mentorship to a substantial number of women in IITM, create administrative support for women's initiatives, and for childcare.

An all-women selection committee consisting of IITM faculty members, ACR member, 1 IITMAA member, 1 IITMF board member, and an honorary member, selected 18 awardees to be supported in 2021-22 from a total of 51 applicants. Even the non-awardees will be mentored to help secure alternate funding.



Increasing the percentage of women faculty in Assistant Professorships to 20% from the current 15%



Next-generation ambassadors for enabling a gender-balanced IITM



GOALS OF WOMEN LEADING IITM PROGRAM

Generating 30% of all faculty applications from Women candidates



Grantees expected to graduate to leadership roles within IITM



Establish an award for Women Faculty in Leadership (Institute already has awards for staff in leadership and given the good presence of women in staff, many have been getting it over the years)

THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS -2021



Prof. Ligy Philip
Dean Planning
Professor
Dept. of CE, IITM



Prof. Preeti Aghalayam
Professor
Dept. of CH, IITM



Prof. Shweta Agrawal
Professor
Dept. of CSE, IITM



Prof. Sheetal Kalyani
Professor
Dept. of EE, IITM



Ms. Rohini Chakravarthy
Board Member,
IITMF



Ms. Raji Baskaran
Honorary Alumna



Ms. Shuba Kumar
Past President, IITMAA

WLI GRANTEES 2021



Title: *Thermoset bio plastic from waste liquor obtained from pre-treatment of lignocellulosic biomass*

“Thank you WLI Team for the support. It has given financial assistance hence I am able to manage my family and research simultaneously”

SHEREENA P JOY
Research Scholar
Biotechnology, IITM

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Title: *Metabolic engineering strategies for enhanced production of camptothecin in plant cells of Nothapodyte nimmoniana*

“WLI has been a great support to financially support and encourage me to complete my PhD objectives and support my family. Extremely indebted to be a WLI recipient. Amazing initiative for women researchers helping us to balance between supporting our families and accomplish research objectives. Encourages women scholars to contribute actively to the STEM community”



SARAYU M
Research Scholar
Biotechnology, IITM

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Title: Sustainable and green manufacturing of lightweight structures for automobile sector

“The award has helped me a lot to complete my last phase of experimentation of PhD work. Thanks for the support and motivation that you had given me in completing my research ”

INDHU R
Ph.D Scholar
Mechanical Engineering

To know about the project

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Title: Development of decision-making tool for the surgical intervention of aneurysm through CFD based modelling.

“It has helped me extend my phd work to a more clinically appreciable research outcome. The funds were a great financial help for obtaining proper domestic help during the pandemic . Kindly continue this initiate in the coming years also as it is a great motivation for all women scholars”



NIMMY THANKOM PHILIP
Ph.D Scholar
Applied Mechanics

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Title: Is The Little Finger Necessarily A Weaker Finger?

“Very supportive. Boosted my confidence. As a result I was able to successfully complete my work and submitted my thesis within this one year. I thank the WLI team for the support to the women scholars “

BANUVATHY R
Ph.D Scholar
Applied Mechanics

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Title: Optimisation of Solvent use and Waste generation in pharmaceutical industries through the application of Green Engineering Principles.

“This award has helped me to achieve my targets and to complete my research work effortlessly. Thank you WLI team for this initiative in helping the women scholars successfully complete their work”



SRUTHY S
Research Scholar
Civil Engineering

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Title: *Durability-based specifications for high strength steel reinforcement used in prestressed concrete structures*



DYANA JOSELINE
Ph.D Scholar
Civil Engineering

“During the past 12 months, I was able to complete my synopsis, thesis submission and defence (on 9th December) without any financial/mental strain. I am a member of the RILEM technical committee on the project area and my Prof. and I were invited to give two presentations on my PhD work in the “End of committee workshop held in November (I was the speaker in one of them). This gave me visibility and three international experts from the committee attended my PhD defence (hybrid mode) because of this. I submitted one conference paper and two journal papers on my PhD work and won a best poster award in an international conference. The award gave me an opportunity (and time) to work with my guide on other projects and proposal writing as well - resulting in widening the scope of my knowledge.

I have been closely involved in writing three industry-oriented proposals with him during the past 6 months and understood the big picture from the viewpoint of an experienced researcher. In April, I joined L&T Heavy Civil Infrastructure as Assistant Manager (QA/QC) for an interesting role related to my work at IIT Madras. The experimental groundwork I have done during this period (and will do till March) will help me continue writing papers with my junior research scholar colleague who is continuing the work.

I am very thankful to you for funding me through the WLI grant. The WLI grant has given me so much mental peace, helped me widen my knowledge, and transition smoothly from a student to a professional amidst the chaos associated with the pandemic. In the future, I will surely help create opportunities for other women in STEM in ways that I can; just like you did for me”

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Title: *Improving Travel Time Predictions Using Clustering And Optimum Number Of Sections*

“The award helped me to boost my confidence and further enrich my research life. It also helped me to support my family financially”



HIMA ELSA SHAJI
Ph.D Scholar
Civil Engineering

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RA. G. PRIVITA EDWINA
Ph.D Scholar
Applied Mechanics

Title: *Studying the relation between cellular 3D traction and membrane mechanics in cells under confinement*

“WLI award has encouraged me to put behind my personal struggles and focus on the work. I thank the WLI team for their initiative. They have been the most responsive and were always there to clarify my queries. My sincere thanks to all!”

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Title: *Study of Climatic Phenomena: A Network-based approach for El Nino and La Nina episodes*

“The award helped me to finish my research work peacefully without worrying about financial problem. My heartfelt thanks to the WLI team for the support for senior women researchers at IIT Madras”

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RUBY SAHA
Ph.D Scholar
Physics



Dr. PREETI AGHALAYAM
Professor
Chemical Engineering

Title: *Utilizing Gamification to make Gender Sensitivity Approachable to IITM Students*

“We achieved our stated plan and goal of putting together games to help the IIT Madras community think about gender issues in a stress-free and fun manner. We are grateful to the fund - as a specific allocation of money for an exercise like this - was needed to focus on this important topic”

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Title: *Creating a Gender and Diversity-sensitive Institute*

“It was satisfying to start discussions on these topics that I think are very important and need to be discussed, especially in today's world”

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Dr. SHANTI BHATTACHARYA
Professor
Electrical Engineering



Title: Gender Audit: Understanding the gendering of IIT Madras

“Helped to plan for hiring research assistants. The award has been useful to get the project kickstarted but has been difficult to use in the ongoing pandemic situation”

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Dr. MATHANGI KRISHNAMOORTHY

**Assistant Professor
Humanities and Social Sciences**

Title: Creating a ripple effect through inspiring, nurturing, and empowering women

The award has helped us in the following ways:

1. It has aided my ambition to contribute to women's development and empowerment goals.
2. This project has strengthened the IIT Madras research program by engaging two qualified women (one Ph.D. scholar and one Postdoc Fellow) to explore deeper into the women in management and entrepreneurship as a research field. It has certainly enhanced the research skills of these two women researchers.
3. Our past and current women-centric research outcomes were disseminated with the grant's support to the research and academic community through academic conferences and meetings.



Dr. RUPASHREE BARAL
**Assistant Professor
Management Studies**

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Title: Manpower Support to Uplift the Research Career of a Woman Assistant Professor

“To fund a graduate student and to gain confidence in applying for other sponsored projects”

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Dr. M. HAMSA PRIYA
**Assistant Professor
Biotechnology**

Title: Gender Audit: Understanding the gendering of IIT Madras

“We were able to hire a event organiser and social media manager for womens forum who manages the events/ updates online. A staff was hired from December to manage in person events and coordinate between students, faculty and staff and Institute admin for arranging the logistics”



Dr. INDUMATHI MANIVANNAN NAMBI
**Professor
Civil Engineering**

Thank you!

We would like to take this opportunity again to express our heartfelt gratitude to all those who made benevolent contributions towards the growth and development of IIT MADRAS.



Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Chennai – 600036

www.iitm.ac.in

For more information, please contact:

Office of Alumni and Corporate Relations

T: +91-44-2257 8390 | acr.iitm.ac.in

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