



Indian Institute of Technology Madras
Office of Alumni and Corporate Relations

Celebrating the Generosity of **Padma Shri Sridhar Vembu**

**Impact of
your
Giving
in
2023**



**Class of 1989 Research
Travel Scholarship**



Prof. Kamakoti Veezhinathan **Director, IITM**

Greetings!

IIT Madras continues to retain her top position for the eighth consecutive year, in the National Institute Ranking Framework, thanks to the world-class research of its faculty and students. The contribution and support of *Alumni and well-wishers like you* has crucially helped this standing and stature. Our achievements in research, education, innovation and entrepreneurship have also earned us the recognition of an 'Institute of Eminence' as well as the top position in the Atal Innovation Ranking from the Government of India.

The institute is making an indelible mark with her '*research with impact*' in several areas including quantum computing, drinking water technology, industrially relevant mathematical models for governance, rendering cancer-cure more effective. Our centres of excellence, the Center for Innovation, Nirmaan – the pre-incubator, the Incubation Cell, technology centres such as '*IITM-Pravartak*' and others, work in unison for not just our nation's building, but societies *world-wide*. We aspire to be locally impactful and globally relevant through all these efforts.

Towards exploring new research frontiers, a Department of Medical Sciences and Technology has been launched to conjoin medicine and engineering. Similarly, a School of Sustainability is on the horizon to research sustainable practices in the Global South. The campus is moving towards 'carbon-net-zero' goal through water conservation by 100% recycling, efficient garbage disposal, and electrification of vehicles. The traditional education system is undergoing a paradigm shift, with our online Bachelor of Science programme in Data Sciences and the National Program of Technology Enhanced Learning, that have won Gold in the 'Lifelong Learning' category and Silver in the 'Best Online Program' category of the Wharton-QS Reimagine Education Awards 2022 respectively. IIT Madras is leading this revolution from the front.

Such achievements are not possible without the deep-rooted faith and support of alumni and well-wishers such as yourself. We are indebted to you for your generous, bountiful, and impactful contributions. On behalf of IIT Madras, I offer you our deepest gratitude for continuing to strengthen the Institute. Together with your support, we are confident of building an IIT Madras that is more inclusive, diverse, and enabled by an ecosystem to be nationally relevant and globally recognised. Thank you!

Dean's Message



Prof. Mahesh Panchagnula Dean, Alumni & Corporate Relations, IITM

Greetings!

I express my heartfelt gratitude to you for your generous support to IIT Madras. We appreciate your passion in supporting the causes you do and I assure you that your contributions will be optimally utilized. This report has been compiled to convey how your largesse has touched lives and made a difference at IIT Madras. In keeping with the rapid, contemporary strides in science, technology we have set ambitious goals for ourselves - your continued enthusiasm and support will help us greatly in these endeavors.

IIT Madras is far more diverse in its set of pursuits, more green and more research-focused. And yet, it remains unchanged over these years, it is still the best Institute in the country, and attracts the best students that India has to offer to come and make a mark. I also cordially invite you to visit your campus to see for yourself, the impact of your contribution, and the growth and transformation the Institute has undergone over the years.

We can never express our gratitude enough for all that you have done - Thank You!



**"GIVING IS NOT JUST ABOUT
MAKING A DONATION -
IT'S ABOUT
MAKING A DIFFERENCE"**

Padma Shri Sridhar Vembu

1989/BT/EE

Dr. Sridhar Vembu, the **Founder and CEO of Zoho**, is committed to reciprocating the benefits he has received by giving back to society. His dedication to supporting educational initiatives is evident in Zoho Corporation's contributions to IIT Madras. The establishment of the **'Zoho Chair Professorship'** at IIT Madras is a testament to this commitment, with the inaugural holder being Prof. Bhaskar Ramamurthi, the former director of the institute and a pivotal figure in advancing indigenous 5G technology in India.

Dr. Sridhar Vembu, honored with the **Padma Shri** in 2021 and a member of the National Security Advisory Board, is dedicated to fostering a balanced regional economy. Beyond leading Zoho, he invests in diverse passion projects, including farming for local, nutrient-rich produce, skilling programs for manufacturing, healthcare clinics, and initiatives for local talent and AI-related technology projects. Notably, in an era of AI-induced job concerns, he champions a no lay-off policy, empowering employees for the company's growth. Driven by a commitment to rural economy enhancement, youth employability, fresh food cultivation, and long-term talent pool creation, Dr. Vembu exemplifies his principles. Furthermore, he emphasizes the importance of increased R&D investment, recognizing the pivotal role technology plays in shaping the future.

His visionary approach serves as inspiration for students to fearlessly chart their unique paths to success.





The report will present a thorough assessment of the impact that your contributions have made towards 'Class of 1989 Research Travel Scholarship'.

Class of 1989 Research Travel Scholarship'

In 2022, two researchers from Robert Bosch Centre for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (RBCDSAI), IITM availed the 'Class of 1989 - Research Travel Scholarship'. This financial contribution made the students research travel dream a reality and thus contribution will translate to considerable new accomplishments in their Research and help to gain experience in their respective careers.



Anusha Kumar
MS18D200
Dual Degree

Department of Management Studies

Amount Sanctioned:

INR: 3.5 Lakhs

Research Travel to (Host Institution):

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, United States

Duration:

15th August 2022 to 28th November 2022 (3.5 months)

I, Anusha Kumar, am a M.S. – Ph.D. dual degree student in the Department of Management Studies, working under the guidance of Prof. Nandan Sudarsanam. Thanks to the support received from the Class of 1989 Travel Scholarship through RBCDSAI Research Travel Scholarship Program, I was able to successfully complete my Visiting Student program at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, United States, from 15th August to 28th November 2022. During my research program there at MIT, I worked under the supervision of Prof. Daniel D. Frey in the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

There is a rapid interdisciplinary growth in experimentation and multi-armed bandit framework in various fields, in live online and offline settings. Our research engages with the non-stationarity of a system, particularly in a live environment. Current systems and processes have important idiosyncrasies such as temporal changes, strength of interventions, and human feedback, which are currently not modelled in the existing solutions that assume stationarity. The research work at the host institute was based on exploring the significance of interaction effects in a non-stationary experimental setting. The motivation of the study is to build a robust theoretical framework to understand the effect of combining various developmental interventions in a complex and adaptive social setting.

I benefitted immensely from the Class of 1989 Travel Scholarship through RBCDSAI Research Travel Scholarship Program, which helped me to cover my travel and living expenses. Without this, it would have been difficult for me to meet my expenses and essential requirements for the stay. The visit has been a great opportunity and learning experience, and the work carried out at the host institute is a valuable addition to my current research work.

I once again extend my sincere thanks to the management, faculty and committee of RBCDSAI for considering my candidature for award of this travel scholarship.



Research Travel to (Host Institution):
Iowa State University, United States

Duration:
26th June 2022 – 14th August 2022 (6 weeks)

Manoj Bharadhwaj

CS20S056
M.S, Department of
Computer Science and
Engineering

I am Manoj Bharadhwaj, an MS student in the Computer Science and Engineering department at IIT Madras. I work under the guidance of Prof. Ravindran B (CS) and Prof. Gitakrishnan Ramadurai (CE). I am extremely grateful for the support I received from the Class of 1989 Travel Scholarship. It paved the way for me to complete my visiting student program at Iowa State University (ISU), Ames, United States, from June 26, 2022, to August 14, 2022. During my research visit to ISU, I worked under the guidance of Prof. Anuj Sharma, Pitt-Des Moines, Inc. Professor in Civil Engineering at ISU.

Classified vehicle count is an essential parameter for managing road traffic efficiently. Most methods solve the vehicle counting problem under the assumption of state-of-the-art computation power. However, with the recent growth in cost-effective Internet of Things (IoT) devices and edge computing, several machine learning models are being tailored for such devices. So the broader goal of our research is to build very accurate small vehicle detection models that can be deployed on such devices. During my visit to the host institute, I got the opportunity to work with Ames city traffic camera data and got access to edge computers like the Jetson Nano and the Jetson TX2.

I sincerely thank RBCDSAI for giving me this fantastic opportunity. I benefited a lot from the Class of 1989 Travel Scholarship through the RBCDSAI Research Travel Scholarship Program, which helped me to cover my travel and living expenses during the trip. Without this scholarship, managing the expenses would have been arduous. Overall, this research trip was a positive experience for me, and I had a great learning experience.



We are grateful to you

Padma Shri Sridhar Vembu



Thank you for your sustained generosity to IIT Madras over the years. Contributors such as yourself enable our students and Professors to dream big and work towards a better and brighter future. We hope you are proud of your alma mater and how it has remained steadfastly committed to academic and research excellence during and after your time here. You and your family have been instrumental in facilitating this significant growth.

Our efforts to nurture the culture of academic excellence that is the hallmark of IIT Madras - quality education, cutting-edge research, and unfettered creativity - shall continue. We are privileged and humbled to have you and your family walking with us along this trail. We wish you and your family the best always in all walks of life!



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