

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2373
ANSWERED ON 20/03/2025

SUPPORT MECHANISMS FOR WOMEN SCIENTISTS FACING CAREER BREAKS

2373 SHRI SADANAND MHALU SHET TANAVADE:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has implemented schemes or policies to support women scientists facing a "break-in-career" due to family responsibilities, maternity, or other factors, if so, the details thereof, including eligibility criteria and financial assistance provided;
- (b) the details of beneficiaries under these initiatives for the last five years, along with the total funds allocated and utilized, State/UT-wise; and
- (c) whether Government has introduced any mentorship programmes, research fellowships or flexible work arrangements to encourage the re-entry of women scientists into research and academia?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR THE
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY & EARTH SCIENCES
(DR. JITENDRA SINGH)

(a) and (c): Yes Sir. The Department of Science and Technology (DST) is implementing a comprehensive initiative, Women in Science and Engineering-KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN) to address the problems of Women Scientists due to "break-in-career" and strengthen women's participation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields. This initiative includes multiple programs that provide opportunities for women in STEM at different career stages. Department implemented the Women Scientist Scheme (WOS), which included three programs: WOS-A for research in basic and applied sciences, WOS-B for lab-to-land translational research for societal benefit and WOS-C for training in Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). Following a third-party review, these programs have been restructured into four new initiatives under WISE-KIRAN. The WISE Fellowship for Ph.D. (WISE-PhD) program supports women pursuing doctoral research in basic and applied sciences. The WISE Post-Doctoral Fellowship (WISE-PDF) and WISE-Societal Challenges with Opportunities (WISE-SCOPE) programs provide opportunities for women to conduct lab based basic/applied or translational lab-to-land research respectively in STEM. WISE-PDF focuses on laboratory-based research in basic and applied sciences, while WISE-SCOPE supports translational research with lab-to-land aspect that addresses societal challenges. The WISE Internship in Intellectual Property Rights (WISE-IPR) program provides training in the field of Intellectual Property Rights, with the goal of enabling self-employment opportunities in this sector. DST is also implementing the WIDUSHI program, which supports senior women scientists in two categories: retired women scientists and women scientists who are not in regular employment. This program allows them to continue contributing to the scientific advancements. The eligibility criteria and financial assistance provided under programs of WISE-KIRAN Scheme is given below:

Sl. No.	Name of Program	Eligibility Criteria	Financial Assistance	Duration
1	WOS-A	Post-Graduation in Basic or Applied Sciences/ PhD degree in STEM area. Age: 27-57 years.	Up to 38 Lakh fund for project (including fellowship @ Rs. 67000 per month and HRA as per norms)	3 Years
2	WOS-B	Post-Graduation in Basic or Applied Sciences or PhD degree in STEM area. Age: 27-57 years.	Up to 38 Lakh fund for project (including fellowship @Rs. 67000 per month and HRA as per norms)	3 Years
3	WISE-PhD	Post-Graduate Degree in Basic/ Applied Science or equivalent degree like M. Phil., M. Tech., M. Pharm., etc. or B.Tech. Age: 27-45 years	Up to Rs. 35.69 Lakh fund for project (including (@ Rs. 37000 per month fellowship and HRA as per norms)	5 Years
4	WISE-PDF (Lab based research)	PhD or Equivalent Degree in STEM area. Age: 27-60 years.	Up to Rs. 42.6 Lakh for project. (including Fellowship @67000 per month and HRA)	3 Years
5	WISE-SCOPE (Lab-to-Land Research work)	PhD or Equivalent Degree in STEM area. Age: 27-60 year	Up to Rs. 44 Lakh for project. (including Fellowship @67000 per month and HRA)	3 Years
6	WIDUSHI	Two categories Category A: For retired Women Scientists, Age: 57-62 years Category B: For Women Scientists not in regular employment. Age: 45-62 years. All applicants must have Ph.D. in Basic/ Applied Science or equivalent degree like MD, MS, MDS.	Category A: Up to Rs. 90 Lakh (including Rs. 75000/- fellowship per month) Category B: Up to Rs. 95 Lakh (including @Rs.85,000/- fellowship per month)	5 Years

The Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Govt. of India had initiated a special scheme “Biotechnology Career Advancement and Re-orientation (BioCARE)” in the year 2011 with the aim to enhance participation of women scientists in India towards research in Biotechnology and allied areas. It provides a unique opportunity to the unemployed women researchers/ scientists or those not working on regular positions up to age of 55 years and having a qualification of Ph.D.in any discipline of Life Sciences or allied areas/interdisciplinary sciences/ MD/ MDS/ M.V.Sc. (Category-I) or M.Tech. in

Biotechnology or in allied areas/M. Pharma degree holders (Category-II). Women researchers/scientists supported under BioCARE Scheme are being supported with a Research Grant up to Rs. 40.00- Rs.60.00 lakh for a period of 3 years to carry out their research endeavor's in Indian universities, research institutions and laboratories which also includes consolidated monthly fellowship of Rs. 75,000/- (for Category-I) and Rs. 85,000/- (for Category-II).

(b) The details of beneficiaries from the DST-WISE-KIRAN and DBT- BioCARE schemes for the past five year's state/UT-wise is given below:

DST-WISE-KIRAN Scheme

Name of State/UT	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Andhra Pradesh	4	4	2	4	5
Andaman & Nicobar	1	0	0	0	0
Assam	5	1	5	3	17
Bihar	1	1	1	0	0
Chandigarh	2	0	9	1	9
Chhattisgarh	3	1	0	0	3
Delhi	19	16	26	24	52
Goa	0	2	0	0	3
Gujarat	5	0	4	7	9
Haryana	4	4	2	3	11
Himachal Pradesh	3	1	1	0	4
Jammu and Kashmir	5	0	11	6	17
Jharkhand	0	1	3	1	2
Karnataka	15	7	16	11	24
Kerala	10	16	19	6	36
Madhya Pradesh	7	4	3	1	16
Maharashtra	31	14	20	11	41
Manipur	3	0	2	1	2
Mizoram	0	0	0	3	4
Nagaland	0	0	1	2	0
Orissa	1	3	4	1	10
Puducherry	2	0	1	0	2
Punjab	8	1	12	8	16
Rajasthan	3	3	5	4	9
Sikkim	0	0	1	0	1
Tamil Nadu	17	14	20	18	39
Telangana	13	3	19	12	34
Tripura	0	0	0	0	3
Uttar Pradesh	20	9	17	16	44
Uttarakhand	9	3	2	3	13
West Bengal	12	7	16	14	34

DBT- BioCARE Scheme

Name of State/UT	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Andhra Pradesh	1	1	0	0	0
Assam	1	1	0	0	0
Bihar	2	0	0	0	0
Chandigarh	1	0	0	0	0
Goa	00	1	0	0	0
Gujarat	0	0	0	0	0
Haryana	3	1	0	1	1
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0	0
Jharkhand	2	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	3	2	1	5	5
Kerala	1	2	0	3	3
Madhya Pradesh	1	0	0	2	2
Maharashtra	3	4	1	6	8
Manipur	0	1	0	2	1
Mizoram	0	0	0	1	1
New Delhi	12	13	2	12	10
Orissa	1	1	0	0	0
Punjab	1	3	0	6	5
Rajasthan	1	0	0	0	0
Tamilnadu	3	2	0	7	6
Telangana	2	1	0	4	4
Uttar Pradesh	3	1	0	6	6
Uttarakhand	2	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	1	2	0	4	3

DST-WISE-KIRAN and DBT- BioCARE schemes are Central Sector Schemes and the total funds allocated/utilized for the past five years is given below:

Scheme	2020-21 (Rs. In cr.)	2021-22 (Rs. In cr.)	2022-23 (Rs. In cr.)	2023-24 (Rs. In cr.)	2024-25 (Rs. In cr.)
DST-WISE-KIRAN	95.00	96.80	79.71	79.72	77.59
DBT- BioCARE	5.82	4.29	0.7329	12.57	5.00
