

Vigyan Jyoti and Engage with Science (Vigyan Prasar)

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In news

The Department of Science & Technology (DST) and IBM India announced collaborations to scale up two DST initiatives—Vigyan Jyoti and Engage with Science (Vigyan Prasar) recently

Vigyan Jyoti initiative

- The Vigyan Jyoti programme was launched by DST in 2019
- Vigyan Jyoti is a programme to promote Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) learning among girl students and to inspire them towards STEM careers by creating a level-playing field for meritorious girls from grades 9 to 12 to pursue STEM in their higher education, especially from the top colleges in the areas where girls are hugely underrepresented.
- The program provides a scholarship, visit to nearby scientific institutions, science camps, lectures from eminent women scientists, and career counseling.
- The program is currently implemented by Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) in 58 districts, with the participation of about 2900 students.
- Vigyan Jyoti initiative by DST focuses on solving the multidimensional problems associated with meager representation of women in Engineering and Technology streams in higher education by building confidence and excitement towards these streams.

Collaboration of IBM

- The partnership with IBM India will strengthen the current activities and expanded to include more schools

in the future.

- Women tech experts working at IBM India will interact inspire girl students to plan for a career in STEM under the program.
- This will strengthen the DST's initiative to increase the number of women in technology fields.

DST and IBM India aim to create a robust STEM ecosystem that nurtures critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and next-generation innovators through Inspire Awards-MANAK (Million Minds Augmenting National Aspirations and Knowledge) – a program targeting to build one million ideas rooted in science from school students

Engage with Science (Vigyan Prasar)

Engage with Science of Vigyan Prasar is another initiative to build interest and create a community of practice with students, teachers, and scientists connecting the high school students to the higher education institutions.

This is an interactive platform that will be built on top of the India Science Over-The-Top (OTT) platform to encourage and inspire high school students to pursue Science & Technology (S&T) for a career.

Objectives

The principal objective of **Vigyan Prasar** is to serve India's science popularization agenda. This is achieved through several strategically important two – way stakeholder specific approaches to communicate about principles and practice of science and technology and implications for development and quality of life. Science popularization, therefore serves as a robust knowledge led tool to fulfill three mutually reinforcing public policy objectives.

- The first is to create and foster a well-informed citizenry.

- This is with special emphasis on developments in science and technology and the open-endedness and continual evolution of science and related knowledge systems.
- This approach creates the opportunity to assist national missions, duly highlighting dimensions of science and technology. Information clearing house functions and secretariat roles are equally important in this context.
- The second is about **building capacities to communicate.**
 - This is through inroads into formal and non – formal teach and learn systems including education and other community centered interventions across thrust areas and regions of the country.
 - This is expected to help reach the unreached through concerted networking at the local level.
- The third objective is **implicit in the two already stated.** It is about engagement that follows knowledge enrichment.
 - This is a non – linear attribute of science communication; determined by the interplay of regulations, ease of access to alternatives, capacities to use them and the milieu of equity and justice to exert rights.
 - It is important to take note of this facet of science communication so that popularization efforts and communicators are not trivialized. sets the context for knowledge centered engagement.

Vigyan Prasar accordingly serves as a resource & facilitation centre for S&T communication:

- Takes up large-scale science popularization tasks/activities.
- Develops knowledge products in many Indian languages; including publications, news features, films, radio

programmes, compendia, portals and a variety of new media, exhibitions and kits.

- Builds capacities to communicate; film making and ham radio are specific examples
- Services dissemination needs of institutions.
- Networks with institutions, experts and knowledge platforms.
- Develops strategies for bilateral and multilateral initiatives &
- Assists national missions to strengthen outreach / engagement interventions. Using VP strives to adapt, utilize and employ new and emerging technologies for S&T communication / popularization.

IBM collaboration

In the other collaboration launched alongside, IBM will work with Vigyan Prasar – an autonomous body under the DST to help India's science popularization agenda through several strategic initiatives, including 'Engage With Science

As part of the collaboration, IBM will run the day-to-day activities of the program, including student workshops, seminars, and leverage its expertise to mentor the students.