

Women in Engineering, Science, and Technology (WEST)

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In news- A new I-STEM (Indian Science Technology and Engineering facilities Map) initiative called “Women in Engineering, Science, and Technology (WEST)” was launched by the Scientific Secretary, Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India.

What is WEST programme?

- **It will cater to women with a STEM background and empower them to contribute to the science, technology, and innovation ecosystem.**
- **Through the WEST initiative, I-STEM shall provide a separate platform to scientifically inclined women researchers, scientists, and technologists for pursuing research in basic or applied sciences in frontier areas of science and engineering.**
- Women may join the WEST program and explore opportunities to become stakeholders in various domains and pursue careers in R&D at various levels: technicians, technologists, scientists, and entrepreneurs.
- The Skill Development programmes under the WEST initiative will provide training for women with S&T backgrounds to brush up on their abilities and become engaged “in the field” as lab technicians and maintenance engineers, filling crucial gaps in the R&D infrastructure of the country.
- With this experience, women can become entrepreneurs to serve as consultants for the operation and maintenance of sophisticated equipment/instruments through the I-STEM platform.

- **Under the WEST initiative, the current support being provided to S&T startups** by women entrepreneurs by I-STEM will be enhanced.
- In addition, a digital consortium **“Connect Quickly”** for online discussion and immediate support has also been established through the I-STEM WhatsApp and Telegram platforms.

About I-STEM-

- **I-STEM is a national web portal for sharing research equipment/facilities and is the umbrella** under which many programmes for promoting collaborations in R&D and technological innovation among and between academia and industry, especially startups, are underway.



- Launched in January 2020, it is an initiative of Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Govt. of India (PSA, GOI) under the aegis of Prime Minister Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC) mission.
- The portal facilitates researchers to access slots for the use of equipment, as well as to share the details of the outcomes, such as, patents, publications and technologies.