

National Centre For Science Communicators

(Registered Under Societies Registration Act: BOM 1194/2004/GBBSD dated 22-7-2004)

Vidnyan Bhavan, V.N. Purav Marg, Sion-Chunabhatti, Mumbai 400022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Sub: A National conference on 'Science Communication – addressing women's issues'

On behalf of the organising committee, it is our pleasure to present you the announcement of this National Conference on **Science Communication – addressing women's issues'** on 7th and 8th January, 2012 at Kolkata organized by The National Centre for Science Communicators (NCSC), Mumbai, in collaboration with the National Council of Science Museums, Kolkata.

The National Centre for Science Communicators (NCSC) was established in January 1997 with a view to facilitate improvement in the quality of Science and Technology communication in our country.

Promoting effective and responsible science communication is critical to realising broader social engagement with sciences. From climate change to the latest scientific research in health, energy or agriculture, science communicators have played a central role in improving public and policymakers' understanding and imparting the relevance of science to local, national and global issues.

The year 2011 marked the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day which falls on March 8, every year, the theme of which was "Equal access to education, training and science and technology: Pathway to decent work for women". To commemorate women on this occasion, NCSC in collaboration with National Council of Science Museums, Kolkata, plans to hold a National conference based around the theme 'Science Communication – addressing women's issues'.

Even today, women's issues – gender issues; the infamous "glass ceiling" and equality, reproductive health and many more, are not things of the past. Women at all stages continue to struggle for equality in patriarchal and both traditional and modern societies. They face

challenges at every step. Science communicators need to take up this cause and step forward to address the problems and solutions faced by women.

To understand these women-related issues on a national level, the contributions of science communicators from communities, countries and cultures around the world are imperative. Lessons learnt from local approaches and experiences may well be of global relevance.

Esteemed Kalinga awardees from India and abroad will be participating in the conference. The conference is open to people interested from all fields of sciences, including humanities and social sciences, academicians, scientists and science communicators interested in taking up this cause. In fact, this multi-disciplinary approach would exemplify the theme of the conference.

Papers are invited for oral presentations or poster presentations. Kindly submit one page abstract printed on an A4 size paper (Single spacing Using Microsoft Times New Roman, 12 font size) of your proposed presentation to the conference secretariat not later than November 15, 2011.

The presentations should involve any of these four themes presented below:

1. Engaging women in science and science communication

The worldwide consensus remains that there is a problem with engaging women in science, be it academics, scientific research or science communication. Participation rates of women especially in the fields of mathematics, engineering, physics or information technology are surprisingly low. There have been misconceptions about women's capabilities in science. Girls are brought up to become good wives, mothers and housekeepers. The false myths of a girl's intrinsic suitability for science have been fostered and passed down through generations. Engaging both rural as well as urban women into science can be brought about by providing inspirational female role models, by making science exciting and by stressing the application of science to our everyday lives. It is worth exploring the possible explanations and delving into solutions for this problem.

2. Ethical issues in media coverage

The market and media today have intensified consumerism through advertisements. Media has become an effective market instrument in creating needs to sell products such as cigarettes, shoes, health drinks and many more, using women as their subjects. Also technological developments have made women's images in media more complex and contributed to unattainable social expectations surrounding women's beauty and abilities. There is a definite

need to address this issue. Can gender-equality experts and experts in information and communication technologies be of any help?

3. Myths and misconceptions – women related issues

Several myths and misconceptions regarding gender, patriarchy, feminism etc surround women. For instance, women always come under scrutiny when they fail to get pregnant. Pre-natal sex determination and female foeticide, both are rampant. There is a need to spread public awareness especially at the rural level – a socio-cultural revolution must begin at home, working its way up to the community network to get rid of the myths and misconceptions revolving around women.

4. Health awareness in women

Amongst all the paramount things in a woman's life – education, family, work and relationships – not only her health but family's health is at the core. Kitchen science, healthy cooking practices, diet, nutrition, exercise, preventive health check-ups, vaccinations, personal health and hygiene, mental fitness – all are important aspects of health awareness for both rural and urban women. Reproductive health, heart health and knowledge about diseases and their prevention is of utmost importance. With continued comprehensive education and awareness, the goals of disease prevention and improved quality of life can be achieved.

Date: 7th & 8th January 2012

Venue: Auditorium of Birla Industrial & Technological Museum, 19 A, Gurusaday, Kolkata - 7000019

Registration Fee:

Students: Rs.500

NCSC members: Rs. 1000

Participants from Educational Institutes, Government Organisations, Public Sector Undertakings & Industries: Rs. 1500

The registration fee includes Conference kit, accommodation, lunches, tea/coffee and conference dinner.

All those who are interested may please confirm their participation in the conference by filling the attached registration/ Booking of accommodation form and mailing it to the General Secretary, latest by November 30, 2010.

Registration fee is payable by DD favoring "National Centre for Science Communicators' Payable at Mumbai.

Accommodation

All the participants will be accommodated in guest houses/hostels in shared rooms. Family accommodation may not be available in the guest houses/hostels.

For National Centre for Science Communicators**Organising Committee**

Mr. A.P.Deshpande - Chairman
Dr. A.P.Jayaraman – Vice Chairman
Mr. Jayant Erande - Vice Chairman
Mr. Suhas Naik-Satam – General Secretary
Dr. Kishore Kulkarni – General Secretary
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Mr.G.Chakraborty

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E-mail:

Registration Form**Conference on 'Science Communication – addressing women's issues'**

Venue; Birla Industrial & Technological Museum, 19 A, Gurusaday, Kolkata 7000019

Date: on 7 and 8 January 2012

Name:

Address:

Fax/e-mail:

Designation:

Accommodation Required from. ___ to ___ January 2012.

(Unless this column is filled, it will not be possible to arrange the accommodation)

Demand Draft No.- _____ Date _____ Bank _____

Date:

Signature

The registration form along with the DD should reach the General Secretary on or before November 30, 2011

Suhas B. Naik-Satam

General Secretary

National Centre For Science Communicators

Vidnyan Bhavan, V.N. Purav Marg

Sion-Chunabhatti, Mumbai 400022