GENDER EQUALITY

SDG 5 – GENDER EQUALITY

Initiatives and Achievements During the Academic Year 2024–2025

Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology

SDG 5 · Gender Equality | SDG 10 · Reduced Inequalities

OUR COMMITMENT

Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology (SIST) is committed to promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, and the holistic development of girl students and women in society, in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5): Gender Equality. Through the initiatives of its Women Empowerment Bureau, academic departments, institutional bodies, and community outreach programmes, the university strives to create an inclusive, safe, and equitable environment that empowers women through education, healthcare, leadership opportunities, economic independence, and social welfare.

During the academic year 2024–2025, the university undertook several initiatives addressing women's health and hygiene, leadership development, financial support, skill enhancement, and the welfare of girl students, thereby contributing to the achievement of SDG 5.

FIRST-GENERATION FEMALE STUDENTS

The University records whether each applicant is a first-generation learner, and first-generation learners are given preference for the fully funded seats under the Anbu Scholarship (Admission Policy, Section 7.3). Applications and admissions of low-income and first-generation students are recorded and reviewed every year under the Underrepresented Group Applications Tracking System (Admission Policy, Section 8.1).

STUDENT ACCESS MEASURES

Tracking women's applications and entry

Every applicant declares gender on the application form. Under Section 8.5 of the Admission Policy (Edition 8, revised 29 May 2024), the number of women who apply and are admitted is compiled programme-wise every year to monitor their participation, particularly in Engineering and Technology programmes, and the figures are reported to NIRF and AISHE.

Policy on women's application, entry and participation

Section 8 of the Admission Policy, Non-Discrimination Policies, commits the University to equal opportunities for all applicants, so that access to higher education is not hindered by gender, caste, religion, socio-economic

status or physical abilities. The Gender Policy bases recruitment and promotion on skills and experience, with equal pay and gender balance in decision-making bodies.

Women's access schemes

Sathyabama recognises the importance of providing equitable educational opportunities and a supportive learning environment for girl students, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Scholarships and Financial Assistance: Dedicated scholarships and freeships support female students from economically weaker sections, helping reduce financial barriers to higher education and promoting equal access to academic opportunities.

Digital Empowerment: Through corporate social responsibility partnerships, including its association with the State Bank of India, the university has facilitated laptop distribution to girl students, strengthening digital access and educational opportunities.

Encouraging women in subjects where they are under-represented

STEM Mentorship and Career Guidance: Specialised mentorship programmes, career guidance initiatives, and academic support encourage girl students to pursue higher education and careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

The ACM-W Sathyabama Student Chapter organised SHEroic Week from 6 to 8 March 2025 to celebrate International Women's Day and highlight women in technology, including the panel “HER STORY: She Speaks Power”. The WiCyS (Women in Cyber Security) student chapter of the Department of CSE (Cyber Security) ran a school outreach programme on social-media awareness and career guidance for students of grades 9 to 11 at Atomic Energy Central School 2, Kalpakkam. The Department of Computer Science and Engineering also launched the Society of Women Engineers (SWE), an engineering and technology initiative exclusively for girl students.



Figure 1: “HER STORY: She Speaks Power” panel, 6 March 2025



Figure 2: SHEroic Week 2025, ACM-W Student Chapter

SENIOR FEMALE ACADEMICS

The university actively promotes women's participation in leadership, decision-making, entrepreneurship, and community development through its Women Empowerment Bureau.

Women's Leadership in Academia: Women occupy approximately 60% of academic leadership positions at the university, demonstrating the institution's commitment to encouraging women's representation in leadership, institutional governance, research, and innovation.

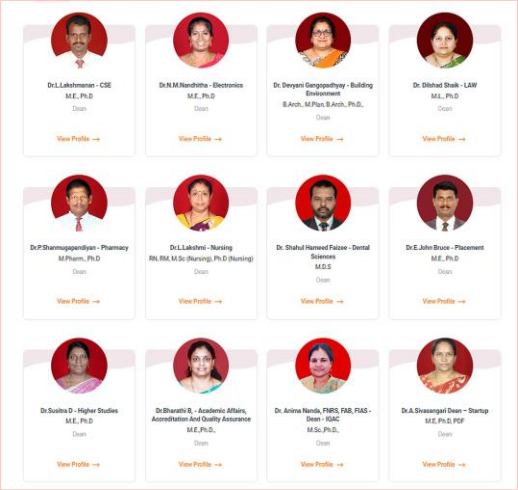

Figure 3: Women in academic leadership positions at Sathyabama

In 2024–25, two women faculty members received women scientist awards: CSIR ASPIRE and the SERB POWER Grant. A researcher from the Centre for Climate Change Studies received the Women Diver Hall of Fame (USA) award for underwater research in Lakshadweep.

WOMEN'S PROGRESS MEASURES

Non-discrimination policy for women

The Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy (Edition 4, revised 29 May 2024) states that Sathyabama provides equal employment opportunity to women and is committed to upholding working women's fundamental right to equality and dignity at the workplace. The Internal Complaints Committee, constituted under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, handles complaints of sexual harassment, and at least half of its members are women.

Grievance Redressal and Student Protection: Formal grievance-redressal mechanisms and institutional support systems provide avenues for addressing concerns and ensuring a safe, respectful, and inclusive campus environment.

Safe and Inclusive Campus Infrastructure: The university provides separate hostel facilities for girl students and promotes accessibility through ramps, tactile pathways, Braille resources, and sign-language interpretation facilities for differently-abled women.

Non-discrimination policy for transgender people

The Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of gender identity. The application form provides a “Transgender / Other” gender option for voluntary disclosure; this information is strictly confidential, recorded only in aggregate and never used as a ground for rejecting an application (Admission Policy, Section 8.6).

Maternity and paternity policies

Women employees receive six months of paid maternity leave, childcare leave and special leave in cases of adoption. Maternity and paternity benefits are provided under the University's Service Rules, Procedures and Policy (revised September 2024).

Accessible childcare

The Mother Theresa Day Care Centre on campus is an exclusive facility for the children of Sathyabama employees, aged six months to three and a half years. It has wide playrooms, three sleeping rooms, rubber-padded walls for safety, a separate kitchen for children's food and hygienic toilets, and a trained Montessori teacher guides the children's early learning.



Figure 4: Play and learning area of the Mother Theresa Day Care Centre



Figure 5: Children of Sathyabama employees at the Day Care Centre

Women's mentoring schemes

Women Empowerment Bureau: The bureau organises more than 20 programmes annually focusing on women's socio-economic development, vocational and skill-based training, income-generation opportunities, awareness of legal rights, and prevention of gender-based violence.

The Bureau also provides career mentoring for women students, and the ACM-W Student Chapter runs technical workshops, leadership programmes and outreach that help women students explore opportunities in technology.

Tracking women's graduation rates

Women's applications and admissions are compiled programme-wise every year (Admission Policy, Section 8.5), and the progress of first-generation learners is monitored through mentoring so that timely support can be given.

Policy protecting those who report discrimination

Under the Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy, students can voice concerns and submit reports without fear of retaliation. The Internal Complaints Committee protects the identity of complainants, ensures that victims and witnesses are not victimised, and prohibits retaliation or adverse action against anyone engaged in a protected activity.

WOMEN'S HEALTH, HYGIENE AND WELL-BEING

Sathyabama places significant emphasis on ensuring access to healthcare, menstrual hygiene awareness, and overall physical and mental well-being among women and girl students.

ANBU Health Cards – 'She First': Launched in May 2024 by Chancellor Dr. Mariazeena Johnson, in the presence of actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu, this initiative aims to strengthen women's access to healthcare by distributing ANBU Health Cards to girl students, female staff members, and women in public life.

Madugai – The Strength Project: This initiative focuses on distributing health and hygiene kits to government schoolgirls and women across 21 adopted schools in the Chennai suburbs, promoting menstrual hygiene and personal health awareness.



Figure 6: ANBU 'She First' Health Card



Figure 7: Madugai – The Strength Project



Additional photograph: ANBU 'She First' Health Card initiative

Guest Lecture on Optical Imaging Techniques for Cervical Cancer Diagnosis :

The Department of Biomedical Engineering organised a guest lecture on "Recent Trends in Optical Imaging Techniques for Cervical Cancer Diagnosis" by Dr. Uttam Pal of IIITDM on 16 July 2024 at the Bio Seminar Hall.

The lecture introduced students to technologies for the early detection of a cancer that affects women, linking engineering research with women's health.



Figure 3: Guest Lecture on Optical Imaging Techniques for Cervical Cancer Diagnosis

Community Health and Nutrition Outreach: Through programmes such as Feeding the Future and Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, the university conducts awareness campaigns on anaemia prevention, reproductive health, lifestyle diseases, balanced nutrition, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) practices for women and schoolgirls.

Sanitary Napkin Vending Machine Donated to the Adopted School: The College of Nursing and the Department of Physiotherapy (BPT) donated a sanitary napkin vending machine, a first-aid kit and climbers to the institution's adopted school. The vending machine gives schoolgirls dependable access to menstrual hygiene products on the school premises, which supports their dignity, health and regular attendance.



Mental Health and Dental Care: The School of Allied Health Sciences and Dental College organise free health screening camps and nutrition awareness programmes in neighbouring communities, including Semmancheri and Sholinganallur. The university also provides confidential psychological counselling and yoga sessions to support the mental and emotional well-being of women students.



Figure 8: Community health and nutrition outreach with women and schoolgirls



Figure 9: Dental care at Sathyabama Dental College

The School of Law hosted a two-day national debate on menstrual leave on 25–26 July 2024, and the Centre for Drug Discovery and Development, with the Department of CSE (AI and Robotics), VivagenDx Labs and TNFOG, commemorated World Endometriosis Month on 28 March 2025.



Figure 10: National Debate on Menstrual Leave, 25–26 July 2024

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT, LEADERSHIP AND ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

University Empowerment Partnership: Sathyabama's association with actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu as its University Empowerment Partner has strengthened initiatives promoting women's leadership and empowerment. Programmes such as the RISE initiative provide platforms for leadership development, confidence-building, and awareness among women and students.



Figure 11: RISE initiative for women's empowerment

Under RISE, the University identified, trained and empowered a group of women to become professional auto drivers, sponsoring autos for ten underprivileged and destitute women and equipping them with training, valid licences and badges; for them it means independence, financial stability and confidence. The campaign also includes initiatives for fisherwomen and tribal women.



Figure 12: Women trained as professional auto drivers under RISE

The University celebrated Women's Day 2025 with women leaders and achievers, and the School of Law held a gender sensitization workshop, “Women in AI and Media”, on 6 November 2024.



Figure 13: Women's Day 2025 at Sathyabama



Figure 14: Lamp lighting at the Women's Day 2025 celebration



Figure 15: Women achievers honoured on Women's Day 2025



Figure 16: Gender sensitization workshop “Women in AI and Media”, 6 November 2024

Career outcomes: campus placement 2024–25

The Centre for Training and Placement prepares every final-year student, women and men alike, for campus recruitment. During 2024–25, more than 380 companies visited the campus, and 3,454 of the 3,724 eligible students were placed, a placement rate of 92.74%. More than 40% of students were placed in Dream, Super Dream and Elite companies. The average annual package was Rs. 5.70 lakh and the highest was Rs. 41.20 lakh, offered by Amazon. Recruiters included Amazon, Accenture, Capgemini, Cognizant, HCL, IBM, TCS and Zoho.



Figure 17: Women students placed through campus recruitment, with University officials



Figure 18: Women students felicitated on their campus placement

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Beyond the university campus, Sathyabama extends its commitment to gender equality to surrounding communities through outreach programmes, awareness campaigns, and welfare initiatives. By engaging with government schools, rural communities, and economically disadvantaged women, the university promotes awareness of women's rights, health, hygiene, education, and financial independence.

Through its adopted schools and community development programmes, the institution encourages girls to continue their education, develop self-confidence, access essential health services, and explore opportunities for personal and professional growth. These interventions help create a supportive social environment where women and girls can exercise their rights and participate equally in society.

OVERALL IMPACT AND INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

Through its sustained initiatives during the academic year 2024–2025, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology has reinforced its commitment to building a gender-inclusive academic institution and an empowered society. The university's efforts extend beyond providing educational opportunities to addressing the broader dimensions of women's development, including healthcare, economic independence, leadership, digital inclusion, safety, and social dignity.

The Women Empowerment Bureau, in collaboration with various academic departments, institutional bodies, corporate partners, and community organisations, continues to create meaningful opportunities for women and girls to realise their potential.

By integrating women's welfare into academic activities, institutional governance, healthcare initiatives, and community outreach, Sathyabama actively contributes to the objectives of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 – Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls.