

About upGrad Foundation

Affordability, Accessibility, and Awareness

Based on these three fundamental themes, the not-for-profit arm of upGrad seeks to provide educational and enrichment programmes to first-generation learners across the country who have growing aspirations but lack the resources to realise them.

The upGrad Foundation has a wide range of goals and objectives, including teachers' training, mentoring and coaching, career guidance, scholarships, internships, and online student exchange programmes. The Foundation will focus on university students and working professionals including first-generation learners, women reentering the workforce, women journalists working in smaller publications, and those working in the public sector or the armed forces.

The upGrad leadership made its first financial commitment of ₹50 crore with the goal of building the largest pro-bono buddy, mentor platform, and programme portfolio in the world. The Foundation seeks to enlist donors and corporates to grant schemes, thereby increasing its impact and reach.

For more information, please visit <https://www.upgradfoundation.org/>.



Our Initiatives

Vidya Shakti Initiative for Women

The Vidya Shakti Initiative for Women is a programme of the upGrad Foundation that aims to provide courses to first-generation female university students, women with disabilities, women serving in armed forces or police, women journalists in small towns and cities, and women working with non-government organisations (NGOs) under the aegis of the Vidya Shakti Scholarship.

This programme enables award recipients to access one-on-one mentoring to receive career-related guidance and interactions with industry experts and women role models. The Foundation also helps these learners to find jobs and prepare for interviews. So far, we have had two cohorts from 16 states and 70 districts of India.

First cohort | Second cohort
95 scholars | 121 scholars

Scholar Spotlight



Khammam Pati Bhagyarani
— Khammam, Telangana

Bhagyarani is a third-year graduate student with an unwavering passion for Maths, Physics, and Chemistry as her major subjects. She is a student of Telangana Social Welfare Residential Degree College for Women. Her father is a farm labourer and mother a homemaker. A first-generation learner, Bhagyarani feels

fortunate to be selected for the Vidya Shakti Scholarship. She wants to get a good job and support her siblings' education. An aspiring data scientist, Bhagyarani aims to spread word about the scholarship in her village so that girls from the neighbourhood may also avail the opportunity.



Vidya Shakti Saathi Volunteering Programme

Women face three main challenges that prevent them from joining the workforce. These are:

- Skills deficit
- Information and network gap
- Restrictive gender norms

The upGrad Foundation launched the Vidya Shakti Initiative for Women with the aim to improve the skills deficit and promote inclusive education across the country. upGrad employees (mentors) are bridging the information and network gap for young, first-generation women learners through the Vidya Shakti Saathi virtual mentorship.

Information and network gap for young, first-generation women learners through the Vidya Shakti Saathi virtual mentorship programme, which is essential for them as they lack access to professional pathways through their immediate or extended networks. By giving Vidya Shakti Scholars (mentees) accurate information and fresh perspectives, it is helping to improve restrictive gender conventions.

Through phone or video calls, the mentors connect with their mentees, and provide them with guidance, mentoring, and education. Mentees discuss and learn about the opportunities, demands, and culture of the professional world. It gives them an insight into potential career paths and helps them to fulfil their career aspirations.

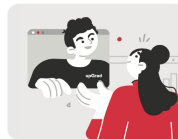
Mentor Spotlight



Pragya Sood
Assistant Manager – Content
upGrad

"My mentorship journey began with Pooja Heikal. Extremely bright, knowledgeable, and clear about her goals, Pooja is a dream to mentor!"

She quickly grasps everything I tell her and relates it to her goals. I need to work very hard to prepare for the concepts I get to teach her."



45 mentors | 150 plus hours | 50+ lives positively impacted

Vidya Shakti Dialogue

We began the Vidya Shakti Dialogue to bridge the learning-practice divide. The idea behind this initiative is to give young girls and women across India access to diverse and accomplished women role models so that they can learn from

their experiences and choose their own path to empowerment.

So far, we have organised two Vidya Shakti Dialogue sessions for our learners.

Expert Talk Series 1



Speaker:
Mitali Sodhi

A seasoned data scientist, she has a decade's experience in working on problems related to data science. She spoke about careers in data science and how young girls can work on various data sets to practise and become job ready.

Inspire Series 1



"Making a plan for your dreams" with
Dr. Ruha Shadab

Founder of LedBy Foundation that works on improving equity in the workplace, she is a Harvard University graduate, and was awarded the Harvard Kennedy School Women's Leadership Award. She spoke about the importance of planning their dreams, goals, and life around them.