



## *International Women's Day Celebration*

Invitation for Webinar

### **“Talking Gender through the borderless lens of Innovation, Creativity and Enterprise Building”**

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2024

Time: 9.30 am-11.00 am New York Eastern time, 8pm-9.30pm IST, 6.30am-7.30am  
California Time

Organized by:

**IGNOU REGIONAL CENTRE  
Bikash Bhawan, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, North Block, Kolkata-700091**

## Concept

Regional Centre Kolkata will organize a Webinar '**Talking Gender through the borderless lens of Innovation, creativity and enterprise building** ' on **8th March 2024 , 9.30- 11 am New York Eastern Time, 8 pm -9,30 pm IST, 6.30am -7.30 AM California Time.**

Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), a Central University, (the largest University in the world in terms of Enrollment) and proud recipient of an A++ award rating by NAAC. IGNOU was established by the Government of India through an Act of Parliament in 1985. As an Autonomous Institution under the Ministry of Education (MOE), Govt. of India, the University has its jurisdiction spread over the entire country and has been mandated to expand opportunities for quality higher education through technology-enabled, Open and Distance learning. It has consistently served the educational aspirations of 35 lakh students as per the 36th Convocation. Through its broad network of 69 Regional Centres and over 2,063 Learner Support Centres, 308 programmes and a strong international presence with its 25 Overseas Study Centres, which are spread across 15 nations, IGNOU, has been offering inclusive education, that transcends all barriers of age, gender, community, religion, reaching out to the unreached students in prisons, distant locations, PwD, military personnel, SC/ST students and transgender people.

Regional Centre, Kolkata was established at Kolkata in 1988 to meet the educational aspirations of 13 districts of West Bengal through a well-laid network of 40 Study Centres serving more than 35,000 students. It is located in the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Bikash Bhawan (North Block), Salt Lake, Kolkata-700091. With a huge enrollment of learners who are women, coming from the urban professional class as well as from backward classes and grassroots, we are a university especially sensitive to addressing the concerns of marginalized sections, our activities are oriented towards motivation and upliftment of society by democratizing education. Moreover Ministry of Education, Govt. of India has initiated the Institutions Innovation Council (IIC) for selected Higher Education Institutes to encourage, inspire and nurture students by supporting them to work with new ideas and transform their ideas into prototypes, while they are in formative years. We are pleased to inform you that Regional Centre Kolkata with the active support of IGNOU- Institutional Innovation Cell under the aegis of the Institution's Innovation Council (IIC 6.0) for Quarter II (December 2023-February 2024) has an active Innovation support system for IGNOU learners.

As a forerunner for the Government of India's visions of education for future India, IGNOU

is actively working towards implementation of the National Education Policy 2020, its envisioned objective of relevant, holistic, value-enabled education for all. Aligned to this mandate IGNOU Kolkata Regional Centre is proudly privileged to celebrate International Women's Day on 8th March 2024 with a special focus on Innovation and enterprise building.

### **Distinguished Speakers**

1. Swami Sarvapriyananda has been the Minister and spiritual leader of the Vedanta Society of New York since January 2017. He joined the Ramakrishna Math in 1994 and received sannyasa in 2004. He served as an acharya (teacher) of the monastic probationers' training center at Belur Math, India. He also served in various capacities in different educational institutes of the Ramakrishna Mission in India and as the Assistant Minister of the Vedanta Society of Southern California. During 2019-2020 he was a Nagral Fellow at the Harvard Divinity School. He is a well-known speaker on Vedanta and his talks are extremely popular globally via the internet. He has been a speaker on various prestigious forums such as TEDx, SAND, Google Talk etc. He has also been invited to speak at several universities across the world, including Harvard University. The swami has engaged in dialogue with many eminent thinkers such as Deepak Chopra, Rupert Spira, Rick Archer, David Chalmers and Sam Harris. He has played a prominent role in organizing and participating in various interfaith panels and seminars, including speaking at the World Parliament of Religions in Toronto in 2018, and at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

2. Professor Soma Sen, School of Social Work, San Jose State University. She holds a Dual Masters Degree in Economics and Community & Regional Planning from Iowa State University and a Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Minnesota. She was one of the core team members of the Social Work Education Enhancement Program (SWEET) a UNAIDS-funded project on Social Work Education in Vietnam. Recently she served as the Co-PI on the European Union- funded grant "Building Social Capital by Improving Multicultural Competence in Higher Education and Labour Market" which aimed at promoting and enhancing multicultural competence in higher education.

3. Professor Ena Ray Banerjee, is currently a Senior Professor of Zoology at, the University of Calcutta, India and leads the Translational Outcomes Research Group that focuses on Immunobiology and regenerative Medicine, drug discovery studies and basic research, including the development and validation of novel drugs, functional food, nutraceuticals, antibody and tissue engineering of stem cells in inflammatory and degenerative diseases for

which her team holds several patents, publications and grants..She has contributed to trans-disciplinary higher education, science popularization and outreach, and promotes innovation involving science and society.

4. Ms Jahnabi Phookan, An entrepreneur for over three decades. Her companies are encompassed in travel and hospitality - boutique river cruising, small group specialized tours, tea and textiles - all of which empower young people's livelihoods, especially women and their communities. Her Mission "Sustainable Practices and Sustainable Livelihoods for women's economic upliftment" led to the adoption of 143 villages, to empower a microcosm of rural women in her 17 chapters, Pan India. Since 2007, Ms Phookan has been involved in Assam's cottage industry of weaving when she started Lahé Looms to enable a sustainable livelihood model to rural women by providing quality yarn and collecting their produce from their doorsteps, through her band of weavers. In 2011, Jahnabi set up her handloom weaving centre next to her wildlife lodge, the Diphlu River Lodge in Kaziranga. Lahé Looms under the registered company Lahé Lifestyle works towards the promotion of Assam's unique weaving vernacular (Lahé denotes slow=organic). For her efforts in this sector, Ms Phookan has been appointed a member of the Handloom Committee under the Ministry of Textiles in Sept 2021.

5. Mr Prabhat Bezbaruah (PHD) An alumnus of IIM Calcutta, he joined Bank of America, where he worked in Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and Manila. He pursued a PhD in Finance at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, where he taught Options and Futures to BBA students for a while. Returning to India in 1988, he looked after his family's tea business from around 1990. Under his leadership, the business has grown from a base of 5 lakh kilos, both organically and through acquisitions, and today produces around 12 million kilos of black tea. During his tea career, he has been Chairman of Assam Tea Planters' Association for two terms, Director of Assam Tea Corporation Ltd., Economic Adviser to the Chief Minister, Assam, Member Board of Governors Indian Institute of Plantation Management for five terms, Member Tea Board for two terms, Member SN Menon Committee on Plantation Sector Reforms, Member Tea Advisory Committee under Commerce Ministry, Director Assam Power Distribution Company Ltd., Chairman Tea Research Association (Tocklai) for two terms, Chairman Tea Board India for two terms, and President National Tea Research Foundation and Labour Market" which aimed at promoting and enhancing multicultural competence in higher education.