



Encouraging entrepreneurship

Recognising the entrepreneurial potential among businesswomen, organisations across the world are providing funding options to train them. Ruchi Kumar finds out more

As more women take up leadership roles in the business world, organisations too are extending their solidarity to women entrepreneurs by making various funding options available to them. Various non-profit, private and government agencies are offering scholarships, fellowships and other forms of grants to aspiring business women for education as well as seed funds.

Global Fund for Women,

for example, a grant-making foundation, supports various organisations in India working towards women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship. Sangeeta Chowdhry, programme director, Global Fund for Women Asia Pacific, explains their philosophy, "We aim to create an environment where economic development is promoted in an ecologically sustainable manner and equitably distributed across gen-

ders." The organisation invests time, expertise and money in local women-led organisations which further allows local organisations to allocate the money where it is needed most. "We prioritise investments in women's economic initiatives focusing on entrepreneurship, income-generation, vocational

skills training, financial and economic literacy, management skills, sustainable agriculture, labour/ land/ inheritance rights, while enabling women's participation in decision-making on economic policies and environmental protection," she elaborates.

Similarly, the Asian Women in Business (AWIB), a US based organisation, encourages and promotes exceptional Asian female students through its scholarship programme. "AWIB Scholarship Fund awards scholarships to students who have the attributes to be our next generation leaders, those who have demonstrated leadership, community service and entrepreneurial skills," explains Bonnie Wong, president, Asian Women in Business.

While the scholarship is open to US citizens or permanent residents in the US, it is imperative that candidates trace their ancestry to the regions of Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Viet-

nam or Pacific Islander ancestry.

Closer home, Indian School of Business (ISB) offers the Novartis grant of Rs 4,00,000 to women who have completed their schooling from non 'A' class towns, for their postgraduate courses. VK Menon, senior director, Careers, Admissions and Financial Aid at the ISB, explains, "To encourage female Indian students enrolled at our institute, we offer three need-based scholarships, sponsored by Novartis India, to those female students who did their schooling from a non-metro city within India."

A few more funding options for women

Zonta International, another renowned organisation working in the area of women development, offers the Jane M Klausman Women in Business Scholarship programme for undergraduate and master's degrees in business management.

To help increase the number of women joining the London Business School, they offer various scholarships to their meritorious female candidates. Through this, it seeks to encourage an increase in women considering a management career within the business sector. Funding options such as the Carlsson Family Scholarship, Deutsche Bank Women's Scholarship Programme, Forté Foundation Fellowships and the Women in Business Club Scholarships are also offered to women students of business.

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