

# International Day of Women and Girls in Science

## Interview with NIBRT Bioprocess Trainer - Parbani Chaudhury



### 1. Can you share your journey and what led you to pursue a career in science?

My journey in the world of science has been a rich tapestry of experiences, shaped by a profound passion for unravelling the mysteries of the natural world. It all began during my undergraduate years at Presidency University, Kolkata, where I delved into the intricacies of Botany. The vibrant academic environment and the opportunity to research further ignited my curiosity, setting the foundation for my scientific endeavours. Fuelling my enthusiasm, I pursued a Master's in Biological Sciences, graduating summa cum laude from Presidency University. My journey continued with a Bachelor of Education, where I acquired essential skills for secondary and senior secondary education. Currently, I am working as a Bioprocessing Trainer at NIBRT, Ireland.

Positive educational experiences and influential mentors have played an important role in shaping my decision to pursue science, and moreover, I believe the diverse and evolving nature of scientific fields provided numerous career opportunities for specialization and professional growth.

### 2. What specific challenges have you faced as a woman in the field of science, and how have you overcome them?

As a woman in science, I've navigated challenges such as gender bias and stereotypes. However, I consider myself fortunate to have found a supportive workplace, both in India and Ireland that actively addressed these issues. Despite facing these challenges, I remained steadfast in focusing on my skills and accomplishments, consistently proving my abilities in the field.

One key strategy in overcoming these obstacles has been the establishment of a robust support network and seeking mentorship. Having mentors who believed in my potential provided valuable guidance and encouragement, empowering me to persist in the face of adversity.



Moreover, I recognized the importance of advocating for equality and raising awareness about diversity issues in the workplace. By actively participating in discussions and initiatives, I contributed to fostering a more inclusive environment. This collective effort not only benefited me personally but also paved the way for positive change within the broader scientific community.

In essence, while acknowledging the challenges, I am grateful for the supportive workplace that played a pivotal role in addressing and mitigating these obstacles, allowing me to thrive in my scientific pursuits.



### **3. In your opinion, what can be done to encourage more women to pursue careers in science?**

To encourage more women in science, we can promote role models and showcase successful women scientists. Providing mentorship and support networks, as well as creating a more inclusive and welcoming environment, can make science fields more accessible. Educational programs and initiatives can also highlight the achievements of women in science, inspiring younger generations. Addressing gender stereotypes and biases is essential to break down barriers, ensuring that opportunities in science are equally accessible to everyone.

### **4. How has NIBRT fostered a supportive and inclusive environment for women in science, ensuring equal opportunities for career advancement?**

NIBRT has proactively cultivated a supportive and inclusive environment for women in science through the implementation of policies that champion equal opportunities. At the core of their approach is a commitment to diversity, exemplified by initiatives such as mentorship programs and networking opportunities specifically designed for women. Beyond the standard career development framework, NIBRT organizes workshops and awareness programs, including celebrations for International Women's Day and recent initiatives like a menopause awareness program that caters not only to women but also fosters understanding among male colleagues.

An exemplary feature of NIBRT's commitment to inclusivity is reflected in their tailored HR policies. These policies go beyond the conventional and ensure that the workplace caters to the needs and aspirations of all genders. This comprehensive approach underscores the organization's dedication to providing a fair and unbiased platform for career advancement.

By recognizing and valuing the contributions of all employees, irrespective of gender, NIBRT has created a workplace culture where women in science feel empowered and have equal opportunities for professional growth. The proactive steps taken by NIBRT set a noteworthy example for other organizations, demonstrating how a genuine commitment to diversity and inclusion can make a tangible difference in the lives of their employees.

### **5. How would you describe the NIBRT company culture, and how does it contribute to the inclusivity and support of female employees?**

At NIBRT, I've experienced a workplace culture that goes beyond the professional realm – it's a family that genuinely cares. The understanding, flexibility, and support I've received from my colleagues and team leads, and especially the HR team have been nothing short of exceptional.

Navigating pregnancy can be challenging for many women, but the unwavering support that I've received at NIBRT has made it a positive and empowering experience. From flexible work arrangements to compassionate understanding during medical appointments, the commitment to employee well-being is truly commendable.

I believe that sharing positive experiences can inspire positive change. As we enter the New Year, I'm excited to shed light on the importance of supportive workplaces, especially for women during significant life events.

**PS:** Here's to a supportive work environment that values its employees and fosters a healthy work-life balance. If you're a woman and considering your next career move, I encourage you to explore opportunities at NIBRT. It's more than just a workplace – it's a community that cares.

