



FEMME FIRST FOUNDATION

# WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT FELLOWSHIP

India's *first* Fellowship for Women in  
Politics

January 2023 – June 2023





# ABOUT FEMME FIRST FOUNDATION

Femme First Foundation is a non-partisan, non-profit organisation committed to amplifying women's leadership in Indian politics through capacity-building, mentorship, and advocacy. Our aim is not limited to increasing women's representation but also to enhance the quality of their representation.

**Vision:** A world where leaders are truly representative of the people they lead.

**Mission:** We seek to amplify leadership of women in Indian politics through the following ways:

- Make politics an attractive career option
- Reduce entry-barriers
- Enhance the quality of representation
- Build a network of women politicians
- Amplify impact





# FOUNDER'S NOTE



**Angellica Aribam**

Founder, *Femme First Foundation*

It gives me immense pleasure to announce the next batch of India's first fellowship for women in politics. If you are wondering why do we offer a fellowship exclusively for women politicians? Let me share my story.

Having faced racism throughout my life, I have always aspired to create a world where nobody's voice will be suppressed because of their identity. As a 20-year-old, I entered politics, believing it to be the best way to change the status quo. After two election victories within months, I was elevated to national politics. For five years, I lived and breathed politics. It was a great learning curve.

But navigating the labyrinth of the political world is tough, especially for women. The political system is mired with sexism where women are denied opportunities, face tokenism, are trolled, and also subjected to physical and sexual violence often.

To push back and survive, I constantly endeavored to upskill and equip myself with new ideas and best practices of politicking. With no organization in India focusing on women politicians and no intra-party institutional support, it wasn't easy. As a first-generation-woman in politics, I wish I had a mentor who could show me the ropes.

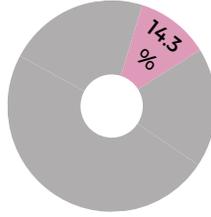
As a fellow at *Vital Voices*, an American NGO by Hillary Clinton, I was mentored by former women prime ministers and developed strong relationships with women politicians from across the globe. The intensive *Public Narrative* workshops by Prof Marshall Ganz at *Harvard Kennedy School* made me more aware about myself and in effect, about the people around me, instilling in me a stronger purpose and mission.

For a few years now, I've been reflecting on how to advance women's participation in politics based on all that I have seen and experienced firsthand -- the good and the bad. *Femme First Foundation* is the result of that reflection and is fully committed to amplifying women's leadership in Indian politics. Women in Government Fellowship is the organization's flagship program and my own way of paying it forward. It is designed with the opportunities I got and wished more women had; and the opportunities I wished somebody had given me. I hope you'll make the most of it.





# THE PROBLEM



- India ranks 148 out of 193 countries in women's representation in parliaments
- In the Lower House of India's bicameral Parliament, there are merely 14.3% women, which is significantly below the global average of 25.1%. The figure in State Legislative Assemblies is more dismal with an average of 8%
- These figures are from 2019 Parliamentary elections, which demonstrate the largest number of women (78 out of 543 seats) represented in the Lok Sabha

Lack of representation translates to neglect of the needs of many sections in the society, especially women.





# OUR OTHER PROGRAMS

## Women in Government Conclaves

This is an international platform that brings together political leaders with different party affiliations from across the world to discuss and share ideas on how to advance women's participation in politics.

## Gendered Leadership Course

A 6-week course that educates on how gender practices play out in everyday life. Learners understand the history and waves of feminism; concept of intersectionality; the need for mainstreaming gender in policy-making, and the importance of gendered leadership.

## #WomenChangemakers in Governance

This was a campaign in collaboration with Twitter India to recognise and highlight women leaders in public office who have been adopting innovative approaches, specifically social media and Twitter, to make governance more accessible to the public during the pandemic.

## Women in Government Awards

These awards recognize and celebrate women political leaders. With these awards, we aspire to highlight women politicians across various categories: Sarpanch, Corporator, MLA, and MP.



# PROGRAMS

## GENDERED LEADERSHIP COURSE



200+ learners



2500+ hours of learning administered

This is a 6-week course that educates on how gender practices play out in everyday life. Learners understand the history and waves of feminism; concept of intersectionality; the need for mainstreaming gender in policy-making, and the importance of gendered leadership. It has completed 6 cohorts.



# PROGRAMS

## WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT CONCLAVES



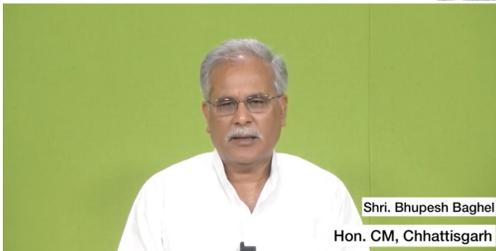
1 Million+ views



70+ political leaders from across the world



The annual Women in Government Conclave started in New Delhi in 2019 and has completed four editions. The recent Conclave was held in Guwahati, Assam. The platform has hosted more than 70 political and thought leaders from across the world, including the Prime Minister of Peru, Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Member of Parliaments, Ministers, and MLAs.



Shri. Bhupesh Baghel  
Hon. CM, Chhattisgarh



Ms. Violeta Bermudez  
Former PM, Peru  
speak some words at this Important Women In Government Conclave.

# PROGRAMS

## WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT AWARDS

**147** nominees  
**2700+** nominations  
**30,000+** votes



These awards recognize and celebrate women political leaders. With these awards we aspire to highlight women politicians across various categories: Sarpanch, Corporator, MLA, and MP.

## Winners of WIG Awards 2020



**Ms. Yamin Kidwai,**  
**Winner**  
**Outstanding Sarpanch**



**Ms. Divya Kumar**  
**Winner**  
**Outstanding MP**



**Ms. Sowmya Reddy,**  
**Winner**  
**Outstanding MP**

# PROGRAMS

## #WOMENCHANGEMAKERS IN GOVERNANCE

In Partnership with



50 nominations

19 #WomenChangemakers Recognised

This was a campaign in collaboration with Twitter India in 2021 to recognise and highlight women leaders in public office who have been adopting innovative approaches, specifically social media and Twitter, to make governance more accessible to the public during the pandemic.

### #WomenChangemakers in Governance



Ms. Pami Baruah  
Officer on Special  
Duty (OSD), National  
Health Mission, Assam



Ms. D. Roopa  
Muzdal  
Inspector General of  
Police



Ms. Jabi Malher  
Deputy Chairperson,  
Aluva Municipality



Ms. Ashwani Dey  
Minister  
Advisor, Delhi  
Government



Ms. Uma Mahalingam  
Principal Secretary  
(Panchayat Raj),  
Govt. of Karnataka



Ms. Urvasi Prasad  
Director, NITI Aayog,  
Government of India



Ms. Sowmya Reddy  
MLA, Karnataka



Ms. Janani J.  
Assistant Public  
Prosecutor



Ms. Mukta Tilak  
MLA, Maharashtra



Ms. C. Meenakshi IFS  
Deputy Conservator of  
Forests/ AIGF



in partnership with



### #WomenChangemakers in Governance



Ms. Savita Anand  
Personal Secretary,  
Minister SW & WCD,  
Govt. of Delhi



Ms. Bobby Mahato  
ASHA Worker



Dr. MS. Lakshmi Priya,  
Deputy Commissioner,  
Bongaigaon District,  
Assam



Ms. Vinita Sahu  
DCP, Nagpur



Ms. Laxmi Dhadod  
Anganwadi Worker



Ms. Anjana Meghwal  
Zila Parishad  
Member, Jaisalmer



Ms. Washika  
Sahay  
ASHA Worker at  
National Health Mission  
of Jharkhand



Ms. Malbom Ranita  
Dine  
Community Health  
Officer, Ayushman  
Bharat Health and  
Wellness Center



Ms. Sitradha Joshi  
Shama  
Vice Chairman and  
Managing Director of  
Mahila Kirtika Vikas  
Mahamandal



in partnership with





# WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT FELLOWSHIP

Women in Government Fellowship is a six-month program that seeks to enhance and improve the quality of political representation of women via capacity-building, training, and mentorship.

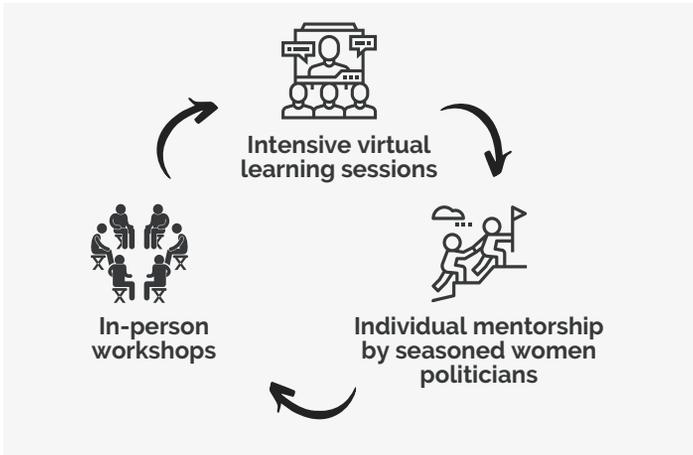
## **The objectives of the programme are -**

- To equip with skills and strategic knowledge to effectively run for office, legislate, and govern
- To develop a deeper understanding of the nuances and challenges of the Indian democratic system and various political theories
- To gain exposure to policy-framing under renowned practitioners and domain-experts
- To be mentored directly by seasoned women politicians
- To build a network of women leaders, policy experts, and campaign professionals, draw upon shared knowledge, and exchange best practices





# METHODOLOGY



## The three-pronged approach will:

- Provide academic & strategic grounding of democratic frameworks & policy-making
- Build fellows' personal brands through personalised Public Narrative trainings
- Up-skill with practical know-hows of electioneering & legislating
- Help learn the ropes directly from a mentor who is living the realities & tackling the challenges of being a woman in public life
- Access to a network of politicians and policy-makers





# MODULES

The fellowship will strengthen the candidate's capacities and capabilities across the following:



## **Electioneering**

- Campaign Design and Management
- Entry & Advocacy in Politics
- Constituency and Stakeholder mapping
- Resource Mobilisation



## **Politics & Policy**

- Public Policy Analysis
- Gender Mainstreaming in Policy
- Constitutional frameworks
- Governance
- Legislation



## **Personal Skills**

- Public Narrative\*
- Effective Communication using technology & media
- Intersectionality in Leadership



## **Ideologies**

- Political theories of Indian parties
- Theories & Waves of Feminism
- Styles of Leadership

\*Public Narrative is an elaborate personalised training of every Fellow on their stories and storytelling as a leadership tool by Coaches from Harvard Kennedy School's Public Narrative team

-> Individual mentorship by seasoned women politicians will happen in the final two months



# FIRST COHORT: REPORT



**1000+** hours invested in **18 Fellows**

Partners:



**Embassy of Sweden**  
New Delhi

The first cohort of the WIG Fellowship was launched in April 2021 with 18 women leaders from across the country, representing various political ideologies. They were selected from a pool of 150+ applicants. The Fellows underwent rigorous virtual learning sessions and workshops for a period of 6 months. They were personally mentored by seasoned women politicians on their respective career goals. Additionally, they also got to interact and learn from four women members of the Swedish Parliament.



**Cohort of 2021**



# FIRST COHORT: FACULTY & MENTORS\*

(\*alphabetically)



**Aditi Parekh**  
PN Coach, Harvard  
Kennedy School



**Amb Klas Molin**  
Ambassador  
Embassy of Sweden



**Anjali Rodrigues**  
PN Coach,  
Harvard Kennedy  
School



**Ankush Singh**  
Core Team ,  
Governance  
Collective



**Annu Tandon**  
Former Lok Sabha  
MP



**Camilla Hansén**  
MP, Green Party,  
Sweden



**Charu Pragya**  
National Media  
Panelist, BJP



**Chakshu Roy**  
Head of outreach  
PRS Legislative



**Dr. Sasmit Patra**  
Rajya Sabha MP,  
Biju Janata Dal



**Dr. Shashi Tharoor**  
Lok Sabha MP,  
Congress



**Dr. Ujjaini Halim**  
Association for  
Democratic Reforms



**Emilia Töyrä**  
MP, Social  
Democratic  
Party , Sweden



**Johanna Silva**  
Waki Vice  
President,  
EMILY's List



**Juhie Singh**  
Spokesperson,  
Samajwadi Party



**Karin Enström**  
MP, Moderate Party,  
Sweden



**Manira Alva**  
Vice President,  
Vital Voices





# FELLOWSHIP FACULTY & MENTORS\*

(\*alphabetically)



**Margaret Alva**  
Former Governor &  
Union Minister



**Mukta Tilak**  
MLA, BJP & former  
Mayor, Pune City



**Pragya Tiwari**  
Editor, Indian Policy  
Collective



**Priyanka Chaturvedi**  
Rajya Sabha MP, Shiv  
Sena



**Prof. Harsh Pant**  
International  
Relations, King's  
College London



**Prof. Marshall Ganz**  
Senior Lecturer,  
Harvard Kennedy  
School



**Prof. G Mohan Gopal**  
Former VC, National  
Law School of India  
University



**Prof. Rajeev Gowda**  
Former Rajya Sabha  
MP, Congress



**Shivani Kumar**  
Advocacy professional



**Sushmita Dev**  
Member of  
Parliament, TMC



**Tanvi Girotra**  
PN Coach, Harvard  
Kennedy School



**Tina Acketoft**  
MP, Liberal Party  
Sweden



**Vandika Shukla**  
Democratic Governance and  
Innovation Fellow, Harvard Ash  
Centre



**Embassy of Sweden**  
New Delhi



# PROGRAM & APPLICATION DETAILS

<b>Application deadline:</b>	30th November 2022
<b>Shortlisted applicants' interviews:</b>	5-15th December 2022
<b>Selected Fellows list:</b>	21st December 2022

## Timeline:

**January to June 2023 :** Virtual learning (approx. 8 hours/month)

**Dates yet to be fixed :** In person workshop (2 days)

**May - June 2023 :** Virtual learning + Mentoring sessions

## Eligibility criteria:

- Women who have **contested election at any level** i.e college, university, RWA, local govt, MLA etc
- Women in **nominated political party positions** for at least 3 months
- Women who have **worked in civil-society/media/policy organisations** for at least 12 months
- Women who are/were **LAMP/Acumen/Gandhi/Teach for India** Fellows and aspire to join politics
- Must be an Indian Citizen

If you don't fit in any of the above but think you deserve a seat, write to us at [contact@femmefirst.org](mailto:contact@femmefirst.org)

## Intake will be on the lines of the previous cohort.

Though the overall program cost is INR 2 lakh/person, we are charging a discounted nominal fee of INR 35,000/- only. However, financial constraint should not be an obstacle for application. Admission fee waivers (up to 100% scholarship) are available on merit-cum-means basis.

**Application form available on : <https://www.femmefirst.org/>**





# FIRST COHORT: TESTIMONIALS



**Zara Farooqui Parwal**  
**State Secretary, AIPC Maharashtra**

*I joined the fellowship purely because of the faculty. I think this journey has been more special because of the fellows. The day I see the fellows contesting for elections even if they are from the opposing party, as sisterhood, I will vote for them.*



**Varsha Nikam,**  
**Ex-Sarpanch & Jt.Secretary NCP Maharashtra**

Through this program, my self confidence has increased a lot. Everyone believes that I can do everything, but I also needed a lot of support, which I found in this program.



**Ankita Shree, Development Professional**

After attending the sessions, my whole point of view about affirmative action policies has changed. This is a change that I can see in me. I am thankful to this course for giving me clarity on feminism as well.



**Arpita, Dutta, National Coordinator NSUI**

I was always a staunch advocate of women in politics. But I think the conditioning of the fellowship has made me so much more active about it, that now in every discussion I am talking about more women running for office, more women in politics.





# FIRST COHORT: TESTIMONIALS



**Tanya Aneja**  
Business Journalist, India Today Group

All thanks to Public Narrative Sessions, I am a better story-teller now. I am more confident of sharing my story and in a very good manner. I just have to say that there are many strong and amazing women, like me, and we are going to change this world, super soon.



**Amandeep**  
Skill Development Coordinator, Sewa Bharat

My confidence has increased a lot during these classes. Now, I don't accept wrong. What is wrong is wrong whether I am speaking to a senior, or junior, whether I cry or laugh while putting forth my point. I will definitely not accept the wrong. My self-respect has become my priority.



# PARTNERS



অসম চৰকাৰ



GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM



**Embassy of Sweden**  
New Delhi



Embassy of Israel  
INDIA





# PAST SPEAKERS AT FFF EVENTS



**Violeta Bermudez**  
Former PM,  
Peru (2020-2021)



**Shri. Bhupesh Bhegal**  
Hon. CM, Chhatisgarh



**Abhinandita Dayal Mathur**  
Advisor, Govt. of Delhi



**Adirana Hinojosa,**  
Former MP, Mexico



**Aditi Singh**  
MLA, Rae Bareilly



**Anjana Meghwal**  
Zila Parishad Member,  
Jaisalmer



**Archana Varma, IAS**  
Principal Secretary,  
Govt. of Assam



**Arunima Sen Chaturvedi**  
Development Consultant &  
Ex-UNDP, UN Women, World Bank



**Brinda Karat**  
Former MP, Rajya  
Sabha



**Chitra Ahanthem**  
Senior Journalist,  
Manipur



**Colette Avital**  
Former Israeli MP &  
First woman in Israel to  
run for the presidency



**Dr. M S Lakshmi Priya IAS**  
Deputy Commissioner of  
Bongaigaon



**Dr. Rosie Kalita APS**  
Superintendent of  
Police, (Chief  
Minister's Special  
Vigilance Cell)



**Fleur Hassan-Nahoum**  
Deputy Mayor of  
Jerusalem, Israel



**Isata Kabia**  
Former Minister of  
Social Welfare,  
Gender, Children's  
Affairs; Government  
of Sierra Leone



**Jothimani**  
MP, Lok Sabha



**Juhie Singh**  
National President,  
Samajwadi Party  
Women's Wing



**Karma Paljor**  
Editor in Chief,  
EastMejo



**Karpum Pegu**  
Entrepreneur



**Lalitha Kumaramangalam**  
BJP leader & Former Chair,  
National Commission for Women



**Makepeace Sithou**  
Journalist



**Nazia Erum,**  
Author



**Nishtha Gautam,**  
Opinion Editor - The  
Quint



**Oana Bizgan,**  
MP, Romania



**Padmaja Joshi**  
Editor, Times Now





# PAST SPEAKERS AT FFF EVENTS



**Pomi Baruah**  
OSD, National Health  
Mission, Govt. of Assam



**Prianka Rao**  
Lawyer & Policy  
Analyst



**Prof. Jayati Ghosh**  
Economist



**Rachel Reese**  
Mayor of Nelson, New  
Zealand



**Rafiul Alom  
Rahman,**  
Founder, The Queer  
Muslim Project



**Rony Yedidia Clein**  
Deputy Chief of Mission,  
Embassy of Israel



**Sowmya Reddy**  
MLA, Govt. of  
Karnataka



**Sunaina Arya**  
Editor of Dalit Feminist  
Theory (A Reader)



**Yashomati Thakur**  
Minister for Women and  
Child Development  
Department, Maharashtra



**Yashshri Soman**  
Public Policy  
Specialist





# FEATURES





# TEAM

## Core Team



**Ms. Angellica Aribam**  
Founder



**Ms. Michelle Rose Markos**  
Program Manager

## Advisory Board



**Ms. Margaret Alva**  
Former Governor &  
Union Minister



**Ms. Annu Tandon**  
Samajwadi Party member  
& Former Lok Sabha MP



**Ms. Charu Pragya**  
Spokesperson, BJP



**Dr. Sasmit Patra**  
Rajya Sabha MP &  
Spokesperson, Biju Janata dal





# CONNECT



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Femme First Foundation



[contact@femmefirst.org](mailto:contact@femmefirst.org)

