

# 15 women entrepreneurs selected for Zone Startups India's empower accelerator programme

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CHENNAI: Fifteen women entrepreneurs have been selected by Zone Startups India for its "empower" accelerator programme for women entrepreneurs in tech businesses.

The 'empower' initiative, launched in April 2016, is backed by department of science and technology, GIZ, Vodafone India, Google, Nishith Desai Associates, and SheEO (a Toronto-based women entrepreneur support organisation).

Zone Startups India received 181 applications from women entrepreneurs across India.

After a competitive selection process, involving application evaluation and personal interviews by the programme advisors from India and Canada, 15 women entrepreneurs have been selected for the six weeks bespoke programme.

The programme will comprise mentoring sessions, workshops, industry connects, case studies of successful women led startups, peer-to-peer and investor connects.

A sum of over Rs 60 lakh in cash and professional services is being extended to the top performers.

Ajay Ramasubramaniam, director, Zone Startups India, "We felt that it was the right time to do an accelerator program focused, given the buzz in the ecosystem and the media, around women founders. With this programme, we aim at enabling women entrepreneurs build a strong peer network, as well as help broaden their network - which seem to be 2 major issues affecting a lot of women entrepreneurs. More importantly, with this programme, we believe that we can create women leaders with great business skills."

The following 15 startup founders have been selected for the 6 weeks bespoke programme.

Saumya Vardhan has over 10 years of international consulting, industry and entrepreneurship experience. She launched Shubhpuja.com, a unique science & technology based O2O platform for providing authentic Vedic services through educated and qualified professionals.

Saagarika Jagadeesh has completed BE (telecom) and MBA from Canada. After acquiring experience at Canadian Work Association, she started Primitus Technology, a customer service provider for auto dealerships. It couples robust technology with human interaction to achieve highest possible customer satisfaction and efficiency.

Smita Mishra has been in the working world for about 15 years. She is the founder & CEO of PoolWallet, a pooling platform for gifting unique experiences. PoolWallet offers interoperability for seamless group payments and unique social experiences.

Vidya Jayaraman worked in the chemical industry for seven years, before moving full-time into teaching mathematics. Eighteen years after making the switch, she is the founder of Math Adventures, an initiative focused on making mathematics meaningful for children.

Mausumi Acharyya is an expert imaging and AI professional. A number of patents in this area are to her credit. She started Advenio TecnoSys a company that develops AI/machine learning based hardware neutral CADx plugins for clinical imaging.

Sanskriti Dawle is an undergraduate student of computer science at BITS Pilani, Goa, India. She co-founded Project Mudra, a Braille ed-tech startup. They develop new age Braille teachers in the form of handy devices and interactive content.

Kanika Jain did her BA LLB from the Faculty of Law. She led operations for the Delhi Hub of 91springboard after which she co-founded SquadRun, an on-demand distributed workforce platform for back-office operational work.

Renu Bisht has consulting experience across industries offering management and IT consulting perspective to client organization. She co-founded Vanity Cube a mobile platform which allows users to book last minute beauty services at their convenience.

Taursha Mittal has pursued CS through ICSI. She has been working since the age of 18. She has started Koonk Technologies earlier and has now founded Cloudrino, a go-to place for all Cloud related requirements.

Bhargavi Sridharan is passionate about financial freedom for average person. With a decade of experience in corporate & project finance she decided to start FinMitra, a fintech company which enables financial freedom to mass-market Asian Customers.

Richa Singh's journey, which started with a life changing event and eventually became an obsession to help people, led to the start of YourDOST, a platform that allows people to connect with experts to discuss issues related to your personal, professional and academic life.

Sweta Joshi with a background of Marketing and Social Venture drives the vision, strategy and growth of her co-founded venture Algaari Retail Ventures, which provides innovative and cost effective sustainable technologies that make a difference.

Suhani Mohan is an Acumen India Fellow and recipient of India Africa Young Visionary award from Ministry of External Affairs, India. She co-founded Saral Designs, a startup providing access to high quality affordable menstrual hygiene products to women in India.

Aditi Chadha, a recipient of the SheCEO award and experience of about seven years in Silicon Valley, is the founder, CEO and Product Architect at DAZL, a collection of luxe smart jewellery which deliver location based safety alerts to your loved ones.

Nilima Achwal is an entrepreneur working toward gender equality in India through high-impact, scalable approaches. She founded iesha, a platform that delivers digital courses on sexual, reproductive, and gender education in India, accessible on tablet and computer.