

Established in 1924 as part of a nationwide campaign for women empowerment, Indraprastha College for Women (IP College), is the oldest women's college of the University of Delhi and one of the oldest women colleges in the country. Over the years, the College has come to be recognized for its excellence in teaching, research and extracurricular activities. What sets IP College apart from similar institutions is the uncompromising emphasis it places on women with special needs. The policy decisions made by the College administration in this regard and the concrete results they have produced are significant. Young women with disabilities who join the College always pass out with their aspirations fulfilled, their special needs met and their educational goals achieved. The College has instituted awards in seven categories to encourage differently-abled students. A very special moment came in the year 2013 when the two top awards of the College, the Outstanding Student Award and the one for All –Round Excellence, went to visually-challenged students competing with all students outside the category of disability. One of them went on to receive the Dr.Shankar Dayal Sharma Award for All-round Excellence from the University of Delhi, again competing with all students. The other cleared her NET exam, while still a student of the M.A. Previous year!

In December 2009 with the College theme set as "Inclusion", the institution defined disability and access as a core part of its vision and a thrust area of its development and growth. Over the last six years the College has consciously worked on design and physical accessibility and raised awareness and sensitized the community about disability. It has focused on the creation of an environment where the differently-abled are brought into the mainstream of institutional life, sourcing enabling technologies and learning aids, ensuring a safe environment by residential and transport facilities including easy evacuation in case of disaster, giving full financial waivers to pursue academics, supplementing academics with training in the use of available aids and technologies for skill development and employability and by proactively participating in all affirmative action and enabling provision envisaged by the Government of India.

Students and employees with disability have benefited from all these. The fact that the College chose "Visibility of Disability: Issues of Access" as its annual theme for the academic year 2014-15 reveals

the institutional commitment to accessibility and universal design and its continual efforts to keep the agenda of empowerment alive in its vision and mission tasks.

The College has a record of admitting students with disabilities much before the reservation policy for persons with disabilities in higher education institutions came into effect in the year 1996. The total number of students with disabilities enrolled in various courses offered by the College with residential facility surpasses the 3% quota prescribed in Section 39 of Persons with Disabilities (Equal opportunities, Protection of rights and Full-participation) Act 1995. Out of the total of 161 employees, 5 are persons with disability, 2 of them faculty in the College and 3 administrative staff - a number exceeding the mandated 3%.

Not only has the course content of various programmes of study in the College been made available in various alternative formats, but also the curriculum of the courses, in so far as the College enjoys the autonomy to design it, reflects the core vision of the institution. B.A.(Hons) in Multi-Media and Mass Communication — an undergraduate course run by exclusively by the College has, for example, incorporated Communication for Special Needs as one of the core components of the academic curriculum, which among other topics will teach Sign language and the use of technologies and languages of communication with the visually disabled to all students enrolled in it.

The College has a record of spending over and above the total budget allocation made, for the procurement of aids and appliances for students with disabilities. The College also adopts a proactive policy of mobilizing financial resources for the purpose.

The College also takes active part in the advocacy initiatives for persons with disabilities. The differently abled students of the College participated in Raahgiri conducted on 1st February 2015 by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. A 3-member team consisting of the Principal, the Coordinator, Equal Opportunities Cell, and the Coordinator, Enabling Unit took part in the one-day National Conference on the occasion of launching the National Action

Plan for Persons with Disabilities on 21st March 2015, organised by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship along with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India.