

UPES Hosts 'NextGen Women in STEM' in Collaboration with the British High Commission and University of Oxford, Strengthening Its Commitment to Community Impact

Dehradun, 4th March 2025 – UPES, a multi-disciplinary university committed to social, cultural, and economic development of neighboring communities and stakeholders, successfully hosted 'NextGen Women in STEM – Building Tomorrow's Leaders', in collaboration with the **British High Commission, University of Oxford, and Chevening alumni**. This landmark event was designed to inspire young female high school students to explore careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)—an essential step towards creating a more inclusive and equitable future.

UPES is a University for Impact. Rooted in its mission to drive positive change in local communities, **UPES actively works alongside local stakeholders to foster an environment where education, research, social development, economic growth, innovation, and environmental sustainability** come together. The university has played a pivotal role in creating thriving local businesses and is now entering a new phase of growth that will focus on pressing social issues. Moving forward, UPES aims to deepen its **international partnerships** with institutions, industry leaders, and policymakers, with a special emphasis on **ESG** (Environmental, Social, and Governance) principles and sustainability, to amplify its impact on society.

The event brought together an esteemed panel of senior academicians, professionals, and Chevening alumni, who shared their valuable insights and experiences to inspire and empower young women to break barriers in STEM. The distinguished speakers included Supriya Chawla, Head of Chevening Scholarships, India; Caroline Rowett, British Deputy High Commissioner, Chandigarh; Emma Hennessey, Head of the Scholarship Unit at FCDO UK; Richard Briant from the University of Oxford; Radhika Jha, Secretary of the Department of Rural Development, Government of Uttarakhand; and Basava Purushottam, Chief Electoral Officer of Uttarakhand.

The event commenced with an **informative session on global academic opportunities**, setting the stage for three **thought-provoking panel discussions**:

1. **'Women in Leadership'** – This panel explored corporate leadership and strategies for breaking barriers in traditionally male-dominated fields.
2. **'Leaders in Government Service'** – This session focused on policy frameworks that support women in STEM, alongside crucial discussions on social entrepreneurship, child health, and education.
3. **'Leaders in Start-up, Innovation & Tech'** – The final panel delved into the intersection of AI, sustainability, and emerging career opportunities for women in technology-driven industries.

The conversations during the event reinforced the significance of **gender equality, social entrepreneurship, and government-backed initiatives** that aim to **uplift women in STEM fields**. **Dr. Ram Sharma, Vice Chancellor, UPES**, emphasised the university's **deep commitment to impact-driven education**, stating, *"UPES believes in and is committed to creating an impact through transformational educational initiatives. By hosting events like 'NextGen Women in STEM' with leaders from Chevening Scholars' community, University of Oxford, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK and the British High Commission in India, we aim to inspire and equip young women with the skills and confidence needed to become future leaders in STEM and entrepreneurship."*

Throughout the discussions, the speakers highlighted the urgent need for an inclusive culture in STEM, calling for efforts to bridge the gender gap, promote leadership through supportive policies, and encourage women to take up key roles in innovation and governance.

The event concluded with an **engaging discussion on global opportunities for women in STEM**, followed by a **networking session over high tea**, providing students a rare chance to interact with **academicians, industry leaders, and policymakers**.

UPES remains **steadfast in its mission** to **empower young women**, create an **equitable learning ecosystem**, and **expand its collaborations** with international institutions, businesses, and policymakers. By launching **more initiatives focused on STEM, ESG, and sustainability**, the university continues to **strengthen its role as a force for societal progress**.