

## **“Women must believe in their ideas and the surrounding environment must be supportive”**

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**Established two decades ago with the support of the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India, Government of Tamil Nadu and with technical support from the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), the Golden Jubilee Biotech Park for Women encourages and empowers women entrepreneurs in the life sciences sector. The MS Swaminathan Bio-Incubation Centre, at the park, provides cost-effective opportunities to budding entrepreneurs who would like to set-up a startup. Mentors associated with the park help the incubatees from prototype to product launch. On the occasion of International Women’s Day, Chairman of the Golden Jubilee Biotech Park for Women, Prof. P M Murali, shares his views on what women must do to become successful entrepreneurs.**



### **How many women entrepreneurs are housed at the Golden Jubilee’s incubation centre?**

There are currently 23 women entrepreneurs. The whole business model is to serve the women entrepreneurs of the park. Eighty per cent of all the income goes into facility and manpower costs to ensure that there is a lot of traction. In addition, the park operates two seed funds. The administration of this is also done by the park.

### **Any word of advice to women contemplating entrepreneurship?**

Women entrepreneurs have a bigger challenge than men as their lives are quite interlined with their family obligations. Also, they need a big support system if they have to dedicate time to their business objective without interruption. The good side is because of this, women have greater time management skills. This is something that is quite noticeable. Other challenges include marriage, relocation, children’s studies and career, providing care for the elderly, etc. All these come into a woman’s domain and she has to manage this, along with her work. This, sometimes, is a serious challenge. Some hesitate on account

of such constraints. However, women are now demonstrating higher efficiency to offset these hurdles. The bottom line is that women have to believe in their ideas and the environment around her has to be supportive to make her dream come true.

**On the occasion of International Women's Day, what message would you like to convey to the women in the biotech industry?**

Women are laser focused. They are better at time management and have greater empathy while building teams. This works to their advantage. They have to believe in themselves and build an environment where all others buy into her belief system. Think they have a very bright future in the startup ecosystem and also in leading from the front. Most women-led organizations have a 'human face' and there is a lot of emotional connection. "Believe in yourselves and we can do it must be the motto".

Anusha Ashwin