

Dr Ambedkar College, Deekshabhoomi

Department of Chemistry

1. Title of the Practice

Dr. Ambedkar College's ACS International Student Chapter: Inspiring a Passion for Chemistry

2. Objectives of the Practice

At Dr. Ambedkar College, the Department of Chemistry takes its commitment to excellence a step further with its very own International Student Chapter (ISC), proudly granted by the prestigious American Chemical Society (ACS) - Chemistry for Life in Washington. This remarkable chapter orchestrates a variety of captivating activities that strive to achieve the following objectives:

- To acquire the ability to think scientifically, independently and to make rational decisions.
- To acquire the ability to communicate scientifically using the language of chemistry.
- To develop an appreciation of chemistry and its application in daily life.
- To promote an awareness of the social, economic, environmental & technological implications of chemistry in different strata of society
- To support the students in career and professional development

3. The Context

The ACS ISC program was established in 2005 by the American Chemical Society to support international students studying chemical sciences worldwide. Dr. Ambedkar College was granted an International Student Chapter in February 2019, comprising undergraduate, postgraduate, and research students. Led by **Prof. Dr. Deepa Panhekar** as the **Faculty Advisor**, the chapter conducts career development, social extension, and environmental consciousness activities throughout the year. It forms a student committee annually based on interest in chemistry careers and commitment to chapter activities. The program enhances students' college experience, provides networking opportunities, and prepares them for successful careers. Through the ACS ISC program, Dr. Ambedkar College's International Student Chapter offers a transformative platform for aspiring chemists to excel, fostering collaboration, support, and a shared passion for chemistry's future impact.

4. The Practice

Our program is all about making learning enjoyable and engaging for students. We take pride in being the sole Institute in the Vidarbha region to have secured the prestigious ACS Chapter, with only 15 chapters existing throughout India. Students who are interested in joining the ACS register themselves as members during February-March. To welcome new members, we organize an orientation program where our faculty advisor and senior ACS student members extend a warm welcome and conduct induction and orientation sessions.

Every year, we prepare an exciting program plan with a wide range of activities. The process starts with our esteemed faculty advisor, Dr. Deepa Panhekar, sharing the theme and purpose of the activities. Student members brainstorm ideas, discuss them collectively, and present an overview to the teachers for finalization.

Dr. Panhekar plays a pivotal role in holding our chapter together. She consistently provides fresh ideas and ensures that each activity is unique. She actively listens to the challenges faced by members and works diligently to find solutions. With her guidance, every student member feels empowered to share their thoughts freely, fostering both team and individual growth.

Our chapter has received accolades for its impactful programs, including laboratory safety skills workshops, Chem Hunt, Earth Week, National Chemistry Week, and the highly successful ACS Chemistry Festival - "ChemInspire." ChemInspire, in particular, has sparked a newfound interest in chemistry among many schoolchildren, making it a highlight of our ISC events. These activities have not only allowed our members to discover their organizational abilities but have also helped them develop new skills and perspectives.

We believe that learning should be a joyous journey, and through our engaging activities, we strive to make chemistry come alive for our members. By nurturing their enthusiasm and providing them with unique experiences, we aim to inspire a lifelong love for the subject and empower the next generation of chemists.

5. Evidence of Success

Our Chapter has achieved significant milestones and recognition. ChemInspire-2020 witnessed a demonstration for over 1800 students, marking a remarkable accomplishment. The ACS staff applauded our "Laboratory Safety Skills" program, which was featured in ACS Washington's InChemistry magazine. From 2019 to 2022, our proposals for professional development activities, social outreach, travel grants to the USA, and the Chemistry Festival ChemInspire were accepted, resulting in a total grant of USD \$10,175 awarded to our chapter. For four consecutive years (2018-2019,

2019-2020, 2020-2021, and 2021-2022), Dr. Ambedkar College ACS ISC has received the prestigious Outstanding ACS International Student Chapter award, making us the only chapter in India to achieve this honour consecutively. Following are some of the accomplishments of our Chapter in addition to the ones mentioned above:

- Dr Deepa Panhekar and Ms Swarnima Burande(Chapter member) were invited to attend ACS Summit for International Chapter at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia I February 2020.
- Dr Deepa Panhekar and Ms Manashree Dongre (Chapter Secretary) were invited to attend ACS National Meeting at Philadelphia, USA, in March 2020.
- Ms. Trupti P. Sawant was selected as one of the 70 participants across the World for attending the ACS's prestigious ACS LEADS conference scheduled from July 18—20, 2022 in Washington DC, USA.
- Ms. Trupti P. Sawant has been invited by American Chemical Society for their ACS LEADS alumni meeting scheduled on 14th August 2023 in San Francisco, USA.
- Our Chapter President Mr Akshat Hatwar & our Executive Secretary Ms Deepti Ramteke have won many intercollegiate events bringing laurels to our chapter.

On various occasions, ACS Chapter members were felicitated by distinguished personalities; **Hon'ble Justice Bhushan Gavai, Supreme Court Judge, India**, Dr Sudhir Fulzele, Secretary, Param Poojya Babasaheb Ambedkar Smarak Samiti, Dr Sanjay Dudhe, Pro VC, RTM Nagpur University.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Every year, the chapter welcomes new students who undergo comprehensive training in various areas, including proposal writing, report preparation, innovation, teamwork, program management, budgeting, accounting, and activity execution. This demands a substantial amount of time and effort from the Faculty Advisor. Additionally, coordinating research students, postgraduate students, and undergraduate students to plan activities can be a monumental task. Fortunately, online meetings have helped alleviate this challenge to some extent. When faced with obstacles during event organization, the team comes together to brainstorm solutions. Our primary focus is to create captivating events that captivate participants and the audience, and we have successfully achieved this by ensuring interactivity and engagement throughout the activities.

