



Gender, Diversity and Social Transformation

A Certificate Course

Offered by Visthar Academy
(Affiliated to Bengaluru North University)

July 1 – 20, 2025
Visthar, Bengaluru

Gender, Diversity and Social Transformation is an advanced international course offered annually by the Visthar Academy. Applications are now open for the 16th edition of the course to be held between July 1 – 20, 2025.

Each year this certificate course attracts participants from Civil Society Organizations, Human Rights Commissions, Educational Institutions, Faith-Based Organizations, Community Based Organizations and Social Movements. 300+ participants from 30+ countries have used the perspectives and skills developed in GDST to transform their lives, resist violence and lead organizations gender sensitively. GDST has enabled several of them to pursue careers as gender specialists, gender facilitators and gender program managers.

Objectives

The 2025 edition of the course will enable participants to:

- » Reflect deeply on one's own self and identity and how it is shaped by socio-economic forces.
- » Develop an intersectional perspective to critically analyse and respond to contemporary issues.
- » Develop leadership skills to facilitate transformation in organizations and communities.
- » Learn the recent debates on gender justice, masculinities, LGBTQ rights, disability and empowerment.
- » Understand how globalisation, pandemics and other disasters impact gender and social relations.

- » Study the policies of the government and UN agencies from a gender and diversity perspective.

Contents/Themes

1. Gender, social relations and institutions

- » Gender and self: Personal constructs of masculinities and femininities.
- » Concepts of sex and gender, gender roles, gender relations, gender equality etc.
- » Sexuality, sexual orientation and gender identities.
- » Social construction of gender: role of family, education, religion, media, etc

2. Intersectionality and social transformation

- » Understanding Caste, Class, Disability and Sexuality.
- » Power and patriarchies.
- » Gender based violence from an intersectional lens.
- » Feminisms and Women's Movements.

3. Gender Equality and SDGs

- » A critique of development from a gender and social equity lens.
- » Concepts of sustainable development.
- » SDG 5 Indicators: Gender equality and women's empowerment.
- » Community monitoring of SDG 5: Methods and tools.

4. Intersectional approach to disasters

- » Core Humanitarian Standard from an intersectional perspective.
- » Gender, climate change and migration.
- » Gender-transformative disaster preparedness and response.

5. Gender mainstreaming

- » Frameworks and tools for gender mainstreaming.
- » Policy approaches to women's development.
- » Engendering budgeting, planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- » Gender in organisation structure, culture and processes.



The course was 100% participatory, interactive and reflective. We took a deep dive to learn many themes around gender. ... The course not only helped us to gain new perspectives and knowledge but also many analytical tools to apply in our social transformation work. I feel truly energised to march forward with courage and commitment to justice, love, and peace and to build collective strength for change.

~ Imma Mary, Director,
i4 Connect Foundation

Facilitators/Resource Persons

The course will be facilitated by Mercy Kappen, Rajkumari Nimbale and Roshen Chandran from Visthar. The course will also draw on a panel of resource persons including Ms. Ranjani K Murthy (Independent Researcher and Author), Dr. Sekhar Seshadri (NIMHANS Bangalore), Dr. David Selvaraj (Educationist), Ms. Madhu Bhushan (SIEDS Collective) and grassroots activists who have been working on gender and social justice for several decades.

Methodology

The course follows feminist pedagogical principles and an action-reflection-action model, inspired by the work of Paulo Freire. The facilitators/resource persons will build on the experiences and knowledge base of the participants. The methodologies will include group discussions, case studies, role plays, audio-visuals, and input sessions. Participants will share best practices and develop plans and strategies for mainstreaming gender and social equity in their organizations and programs.



I found GDST a powerful experience because of the interactive learning process, where the learner is exposed to real challenges which they solve and later compare with the theories to gain hands-on experience.

~ Rael Muthoka,
Social advocate and
Community Organizer, Kenya



Unlearning and learning at Visthar: "Gender, Diversity and Social Transformation", a course that has changed the lens of my view on issues of gender, caste, class, disability, and sexuality through building an intersectional perspective. The deeply reflective, participatory, compassionate and feedback-driven pedagogy made the learning effective and comprehensible.

~ Malini Krishnanunni, Coordinator
Azad Foundation

COURSE FEE AND REGISTRATION

- International participants – \$ 800 (USD Eight hundred only).
- Residential participants from India – ₹25,000 (Rupees twenty five thousand only).
- Non-residential participants from India – ₹15,000 (Rupees fifteen thousand only).

As this is an intense, close-knit program, seats are limited. Please apply before April 15, 2025 to improve your chances of admission.

Apply online:

<https://visthar.org/gender-and-diversity/>

For more details, please write to
visthar.programs@gmail.com

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