

ANANT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY: GUIDELINES FOR 'NIRANTAR'

(**Note:** The word **NIRANATAR** which means '*without any difference*', is the name of the 'Gender Champions Committee' here at Anant National University. The words 'Gender Champions' and 'Nirantar' are used interchangeably in this document)

1. Introduction:

Gender socialization of both boys and girls begins early, and it is important to initiate change processes at a young age to shape attitudes and transform behaviours. Colleges and universities play a major role in this regard, because students spend large amount of time engaged with peers in such settings. Creating positive social norms in educational institutions that value equal rights of both men and women is essential to achieve long-term and sustainable social change.

India is home to around 232 million individual's aged 15-24 years, who account for 19.15% of the country's population. Engaging with these young boys and girls is crucial to help them critically assess notions of masculinity and question prevailing gender inequities. To increase the outreach for creating an environment that fosters equal treatment, the Government of India along with the Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Human Resource Development envisages the establishment of Gender Champions in all colleges and universities across the country.

2. Preamble: Anant National University

Anant National University (AnantU) is committed to create and maintain a working, living, and learning environment that is creative, productive and respectful to all irrespective of gender identity. This includes ensuring that students, teachers and non-teaching staff work together in an environment of equality, mutual trust, freedom of expression and dignity, free from exploitation, discrimination and intimidation in thought or in action based on gender or sexual identity. Anant National University believes in - championing gender equality and creating positive social norms that will contribute to well-being of students and staff.

The Guidelines for Gender Champions in educational institutions is informed by the UGC (University Grants Commission) norms of 2015. AnantU is enthusiastic to not just comply with norms set by UGC, but to push them by bringing behavioural changes in the campus. These rules will be called **AnantU guidelines for Gender Champions**. The aim is to promote gender equality guaranteed by Article 15 of the Constitution of India.

3. Objectives:

The broad mandate of a Gender Champion is to provide an integrated and interdisciplinary approach to understanding the socio-cultural constructions of gender that shape the experiences of - all people in society and working towards equality and empowerment.

Objectives outlined under this mandate include;

- i. To promote a social and psychological environment that will address gender norms in its various forms and perceptions
- ii. To ensure and provide a platform for equal gender representation, participation on all panels, committees and activities including classrooms and sports within the University
- iii. To engage and collaborate with stakeholders like students, parents, staff, neighbouring communities, educational institutes to create an enabling environment that would value equal participation of both men and women in different domains of work and social life
- iv. To enhance capacities of people of all genders through trainings, workshops, lectures etc.
- v. To create a safe, supportive and healthy environment where everyone is contributing to their full potential irrespective of their gender, sexual orientation or sexual identity

4. Eligibility Criteria:

Gender Champions should fulfil the following eligibility criteria to be a part of the committee:

- i. She/he/they must have secured minimum of 50% marks or equivalent grade in the annual examination/school leaving certificate
- ii. Should have excellent oral, written, and presentation skills
- iii. Should have demonstrated leadership skills in his/her/their school or college life
- iv. Should have excellent understanding of the socio-cultural issues and prevailing gender norms and practices.
- v. Should be willing to work patiently and consistently with various stakeholders to push their established notions and norms related to gender and sexuality
- vi. Student should have good attendance record and no disciplinary action should have been initiated against them.

5. Composition of Gender Champions Committee:

A Committee will be formed under AnantU guidelines for Gender Champions to facilitate an enabling environment at AnantU where – people of all gender and sexual identities are treated with dignity and respect. The committee will work towards strengthening and mobilizing children and youth to advocate and monitor progress towards gender equality. Given the scope of work and the student body size, Gender Champions shall consist of the following members to be nominated by the - Head of the Institution, unless otherwise specified:

- i. 2 faculty members, preferably 1 male and 1 female- one of whom will be the Chairperson of the Gender Champions Committee
- ii. 1 administrative staff (preferably female)- will act as the secretary for the Gender Champions committee and all communication channels will be handled through this particular individual
- iii. 4 members from student body, preferably 2 males and 2 female members comprising of 2 students from undergraduate, one student from the Fellowship and Masters each.
- iv. 1 support staff either a peon or cleaning staff
- v. If there are members of the Anant Community who identify themselves outside the binary spectrum, then they too should be represented on the committee
- vi. 1 representative of Student Services would be a non-elected member of the committee

6. Selection Process:

The selection of Gender Champions will be done on the basis of their skills of critical-thinking, decision-making and communication which are absolute essential qualities of a leader.

The selection decision will be based on whether the candidate;

- i. Has engaged in visible and hands-on initiatives to reduce gender disparities
- ii. Makes continuous and substantive time investments in mentoring his/her peers
- iii. Is easily recognizable by students/peers as a supporter of gender equality and
- iv. Has experience in the field of gender equality, and an in-depth understanding of key issues and debates

The process of selecting the Gender Champion is as follows:

- i. Head of the Institution or Head of the Screening Committee formed by Head of the Institution will share information about the formation of committee through email as part of student engagement and also put it on notice board inviting applications for Gender Champions.
- ii. Applications from interested Gender Champions shall be invited giving a minimum timeline of at least fifteen days as decided by Head of Institution/Head of Screening Committee and shall be received by the Office of the Head of Institution or the nominated screening committee in prescribed format given by Institute.
- iii. Screening Committee has to be formed for selection of Gender Champions. Along with other members there should be minimum two students (one male & one female) & one female faculty.

7. Term of Office:

The term of office is initially for a year which may be extended for one or more years as decided by the Head of Institution. The Gender Champions will receive a **Certificate of Appreciation** from the Head of Institution for his/her/their committed efforts on successful completion of activities towards promoting gender equality. A quorum of 5 members of gender champions committee is essential for taking any decisions regarding initiatives or follow-up. The Gender Champions committee **has to meet at least twice in a period of six weeks.**

8. Roles and Responsibility of Gender Champions:

The following activities are not just for students, but for all members of Anant community. Gender Champions have to ensure participation from across the board. These are indicative activities and the scope for the year would have to be decided by the Gender Champions Committee once formed:

- i. Create quarterly reports to be sent to UGC with updates and descriptions of activities conducted by Gender champions (mail id ugc.genderchamps@gmail.com)
- ii. Create website, blogs and regularly update them with - stories, articles, governance, schemes and legislations related to gender
- iii. Create an Annual Calendar with activities planned for the year with timelines

- iv. Organize awareness workshops on gender, sex, sexual identities, sexual orientation
- v. Organize workshops, annual fest or film fest on gender equity
- vi. Provide guidance to peers through FGDs, debates, competitions etc. and identify gender based gaps in college activities
- vii. Collaborate with different stakeholders from different education institutions, society organizations, media and women's group to share best-practices and ideas
- viii. Organize exposure visits to village, city and district to facilitate knowledge on gender issues, popularize helpline phone nos. and document best practices
- ix. Train members in the gender champion committee so they are skilled to take on-going sessions/workshops/counselling and we are not constantly relying on outside experts
- x. Undertake regular surveys, small-group discussions, interviews etc. to understand some of the nuanced challenges around gender and map out-possible solutions
- xi. Initiate mandatory workshops for all students on gender, feminism, and sexuality
- xii. Engage and collaborate with other educational institutes, communities to address gender stereotypes around work and social life
- xiii. Encourage faculty to facilitate discussions around gender while facilitating classroom projects and/ or on Educational tours
- xiv. To initiate infrastructural changes in campus like gender-neutral bathrooms, etc., and/or organize 'Cross dressing' days as a part of college festivals

9. Outcomes of the work done by Gender Champions:

- i. Fewer incidences of sexual harassment, assault and bullying recorded on campus
- ii. Increased interaction between genders, and equal participation in different areas of work and sports
- iii. Reduced gendered division of roles E.g. in college fests, committees, student associations
- iv. Projects/Assignments undertaken by staff and students will integrate a gender perspective in its nature and design

10. Assessment and Evaluation:

- i. On the basis of the quarterly progress reports, each Gender Champion will be assessed according to his/her level of proficiency and accomplishment
- ii. These quarterly reports will be assessed at the end of his/her tenure to measure his/her performance.
- iii. The Gender Champions will be awarded with a certificate of appreciation from the Head of the Institution for his/her committed efforts towards promoting gender equality

The Gender Champions for the Academic calendar 2018-2019 are as follows:

Name	Post	Email. Id.	Phone No.
Rupa Singh	Faculty	rupa.singh@anu.edu.in	9662763711
	Faculty		
Roshini Nair	Non-Teaching Member	roshini.nair@anu.edu.in	9969369881
	Student		
	Student		
	Student		
	Student		
	Support Staff		
	Gender non-binary members if any		