

“Addressing Environmental Barriers and Universal Design”

Department of Special Education, SNTD Women’s University Juhu Campus,

in Collaboration with

**National Institute for the Empowerment of Individuals with Multiple
Disabilities**

organizes a **National Conference**

“Addressing Environmental Barriers and Universal Design”

February 27-29, 2020

Concept Note

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (2001) identified three aspects of environment that can either restrict or facilitate a person’s participation in society. These are physical environment, social and attitudinal environment, and policy frameworks at international, national, local and institutional level. It is documented that most of the time the environment is a barrier (than a facilitator) to participation of persons with disability (PWD) and consequently to inclusion. PWD can function effectively well in society provided the society works toward reducing the barriers. Recognizing the specific environmental barriers and identifying ways to address them will improve access for PWDs and facilitate their inclusion. It is imperative, however, also to address all the aspects of the environment parallelly.

Most commonly, addressing the environmental barriers appears to be reactive step with efforts to break the existing blockades. Inclusion experts today are attempting to deal with the barriers by taking cognizance of them at the planning stage of activities and creating environmental designs to include ALL persons. Universal designs increase the usability, accessibility and social participation by incorporating need customization aspect for diverse population.





The learning in this technologically driven age requires the learners to access information in the digital form. The technology tools utilized need to develop content that is digitally accessible. UDL provides solutions to developing such content. UDL thus aims at meeting the widest range of needs irrespective of ability, age, gender, life status etc.



Inclusion experts, teachers, PWDs have endorsed that adoption of universal design principles have significantly increased the opportunities to access physical and instructional environments for PWDs. Awareness about how to address the barriers in the environments to facilitate inclusion of PWDs is thus needed today. Knowing how to assess and structure the various environments so that all those who need supports are included, will help us achieve the dream of creating an inclusive learning environment and inclusive society.

Objectives of the conference:

The national conference on **Addressing Environmental Barriers and Universal Design** is planned with the following objectives:

- To provide a forum to discuss the barriers to inclusion
- To reflect on universal design as a tool for developing a barrier free environment
- To develop an action plan to implement universal design and create barrier free environments

Sub themes of the conference:

- Physical accessibility
- UDL in Digital Age
- UDL: Pedagogical Innovation
- Challenges and solutions for accessibility

