



SHOOTING STARS
FOUNDATION

January– March 2025

NEWSLETTER

Educate | Empower | Enable

Pic: SSF Alumni Meet - Bengaluru, February 2025

Mission and Vision

At Shooting Stars Foundation, we envision a future where all young people have equal access to the STEM knowledge and skills needed to achieve academic success, career success, upward mobility, and a lifetime of economic self-sufficiency for themselves, their families, and their communities.



SSF commenced the year by successfully concluding the All India Women-Only Start-a-Thon — a remarkable initiative that united women entrepreneurs in India to present their innovative business ideas. The finale took place in January.

In February, SSF proudly hosted its inaugural Bangalore Alumni Meet, bringing together 20 alumni for a day rich with engaging discussions, knowledge sharing, and enjoyable activities.

March saw the exciting Netscout All Girls Hackathon bringing together enthusiastic participants from various schools that collaborated to address real-world challenges using technology.

Catch up on all that SSF accomplished in Q1 — read the full update in this newsletter.

Marching Towards Our Vision

1240+ STEM scholars funded
40,000 Students attended our hackathons since BOY 2021



Pic: SSF's Q1 Highlights

Quarterly Highlights

Welcome Ramnath!



We are thrilled to announce that Ramnath S. Mani has joined the Shooting Stars Foundation as our Board Member!

A long-time SSF donor and Trustee for the SSF India Trust, Ramnath has been instrumental in bridging the collaboration between India and the US. His impressive background includes being an Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur alumnus and a pioneer in Industrial Automation. He introduced global automation leaders to India, co-founded several startups (acquired by Rockwell Automation & Emerson), and led advancements in Industry 4.0 and Smart Manufacturing.

Beyond his work in technology, Ramnath's commitment to social impact is truly inspiring. He runs a school for first-generation learners, has led Pan IIT Alumni India, and is driving rural transformation through the WHEELS Global Foundation.

“ As Ramnath shared:

I was attracted to Shooting Stars Foundation for its vision to 'break the cycle of poverty and create opportunities for bright, deserving students worldwide.' As a Donor and Trustee, I have seen firsthand the incredible impact of empowering scholars through STEM education. I appreciate the Board of SSF for inviting me to join, and I look forward to working alongside this amazing team to contribute to its mission of changing the landscape of education, making it more equitable for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, or socio-economic status. ”

We eagerly anticipate Ramnath's insights, passion, and leadership as we continue our mission to empower deserving students and communities.

Welcome aboard, Ramnath S. Mani!

Welcome Alagu!



We are also delighted to announce that Alagu AI has joined the Shooting Stars Foundation as our newest Board Member!

With over 25 years of expertise in Accounting and Audit, Alagu is a Finance leader in the technology industry at Oracle (formerly NetSuite). A Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and gold medalist from the University of Madras, Alagu has been a mentor to rising stars in her field and a passionate advocate for education, particularly for women. Her generous support of various causes and commitment to empowering others further highlights her remarkable impact.

Beyond her professional achievements, Alagu is deeply involved in mentoring, spiritual initiatives, and is an active participant in event organizing, competitive cooking, and creative hobbies such as gardening and floral artistry. Her wide-ranging interests and dedication to community service make her an invaluable addition to SSF.

As Alagu shared:

“ I am a HUGE fan of Latha Narayanan and her passion for life and the high energy that she brings to anything and everything that she does. Shooting Stars Foundation is seismic in its impact, and I am very excited to be a part of this amazing group that I have seen from the outside. I am very humbled to be asked, and will give it the best I possibly can.”

We are incredibly excited about the wealth of insights, energy, and leadership Alagu will bring to our mission as we continue empowering deserving students and communities.

Welcome aboard, Alagu!

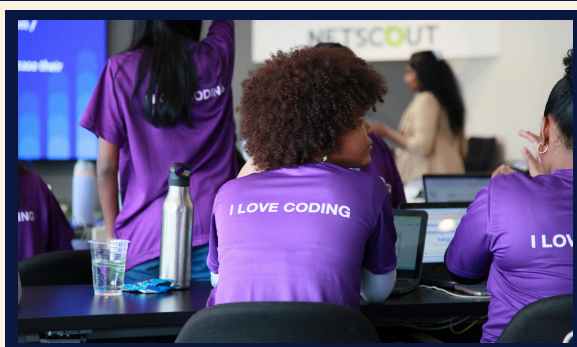
Quarterly Highlights

Netscout All Girls Hackathon

We hosted the NETSCOUT All-Girls Hackathon on International Women's Day at NETSCOUT's Westford, Massachusetts office. It was a free, one-day coding event which brought together ~80 middle and high school girls to explore technology and innovation under the theme 'Technology for Good.'



The NETSCOUT All-Girls Hackathon was a vibrant celebration of innovation, where approximately 80 girls from 28 schools across 19 cities came together to explore technology's role in social impact. The event featured 18 projects, each demonstrating how technology can drive positive change. Beyond advancing their technical skills, participants gained valuable insights into using technology to address real-world challenges.



Event Highlights:

- 110 Registered
- 80 Final participants
- 18 Cities
- 28 Schools
- 18 Teams formed
- 20 Netscout volunteers
- 15 SSF volunteers
- 8 tech mentors

This remarkable platform has already begun to open doors for future founders—offering guidance, exposure, and tangible support to turn ideas into impact.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the prestigious board, partners and SSF Organisers who made this event possible.

A huge thanks to Vaidehi Kuite, Web Developer, for leading the Website Design Camp I (March 1st) and the "How to Win a Hackathon" workshop (March 2nd), which gave students the tools and confidence to shine.

Special thanks to speakers including Deb Briggs (NETSCOUT CISO), Greg Persayzen (Microsoft Field CTO), and our Women in Tech Panel led by Nika Presayzen. Their words sparked curiosity and confidence among students.

“

"The hackathon was fun and interesting! The judges were nice, and I liked how one of the speakers had so much confidence."

– Kaylee Cyr

"It was my first time, and I learned new stuff. It was very interesting!"

–Lillianie Ortiz

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NETSCOUT ALL GIRLS HACKATHON 2025

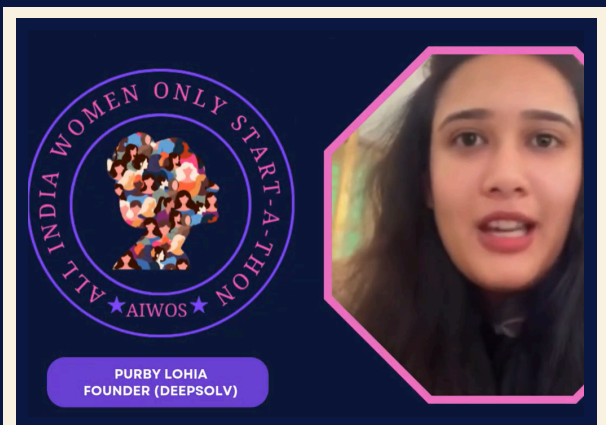


Quarterly Highlights

Programming (India STEM)

AIWOS- All India Women Only Startathon

We concluded the first edition of All India Women ONLY Start-a-thon 2024 in partnership with BlackSoil, with the grand finale on Jan 16th, 2025 that started in Oct 2024. In its first year itself, we witnessed 20,000+ registrations – signifying that the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and thriving and 2,400 groundbreaking idea submissions – showcasing innovation at its best. This event has helped us find 15 such start-ups which will get mentorship opportunities from the incubators and investors to start or grow their business.



In its inaugural year alone, the Start-a-thon saw:

20,000+ registrations from aspiring women entrepreneurs

2,400+ innovative idea submissions tackling real-world problems

15 promising start-ups selected for exclusive mentorship by leading incubators and investors

This remarkable platform has already begun to open doors for future founders—offering guidance, exposure, and tangible support to turn ideas into impact.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the prestigious board, partners and SSF Organisers who made this event possible.

Program Scale

- 20k registrations received from 4696 colleges and 3791 cities
- 2400 Startup ideas were submitted
- 250 video pitches were submitted
- 121 teams participated in Mentor Tank (live pitch in front of mentors)
- Top 15 teams finale

Outcome

- Reach out to **70** women entrepreneur for mentorship, 40 incubation centres for partnerships and **3280** investors for consideration for startups
- **10** learning sessions for participants
- **84%** of participants likely to launch their startup in the next **6** months

Early Wins



- One founder has already secured a \$1.5M investment commitment
- Multiple others are being considered for incubation across top centers

Quarterly Highlights

Alumni Meet-Up in Bengaluru

On February 23, 2025, SSF hosted its first-ever Alumni Meet in Bengaluru, bringing together nearly 20 passionate alumni for a day filled with connection, reflection, and purpose. This memorable gathering celebrated not just where our scholars have come from—but the incredible journeys they continue to embark upon.

The day featured engaging conversations around SSF's progress, upcoming initiatives, and new volunteer opportunities, reinforcing how alumni remain a vital part of our mission. The highlight of the event was the recognition of three outstanding alumni, honored for their achievements and contributions to their communities—shining examples of the SSF spirit in action.



A special thanks to the Cloud Software team mentors for joining us and sharing their guidance. We are deeply grateful to Shivaranjani, Andrew, Deepti, and Sakthi for their tireless efforts in organizing this landmark event with such heart and care.

The Bengaluru Alumni Meet was more than a reunion—it was a reminder that our alumni are the soul of SSF, carrying forward a legacy of mentorship, empowerment, and lifelong learning.

Scholar Meet-Up in Chennai

On March 30th, SSF hosted a heartwarming scholar and alumni get-together in Chennai, bringing together 16 inspiring individuals whose lives have been deeply impacted by education and opportunity. The gathering, graciously hosted by Subha Singaram over a warm lunch, created a beautiful space for connection, gratitude, and storytelling.

Scholars shared moving reflections on how SSF's support has empowered them to pursue higher education, achieve academic success, and uplift their families.



It was a day filled with hope, laughter, and meaningful conversations about growth, resilience, and the journey ahead.

“*It was an inspiring experience sharing lunch with these talented young individuals, witnessing their passion and determination to succeed... Seeing the remarkable progress they've made in uplifting their families and communities filled me with pride.*”

- Subha Singaram

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Subha and to all our donors and supporters who make gatherings like this—and the dreams they celebrate—possible.

Quarterly Highlights

Training Summary

Wellness Interview Initiative

Launched in November 2024, the Wellness Interview Initiative is a new step forward in SSF's commitment to holistic scholar development. Designed to offer personalized support beyond academics, the initiative addresses scholars' emotional well-being, career concerns, and personal growth needs.



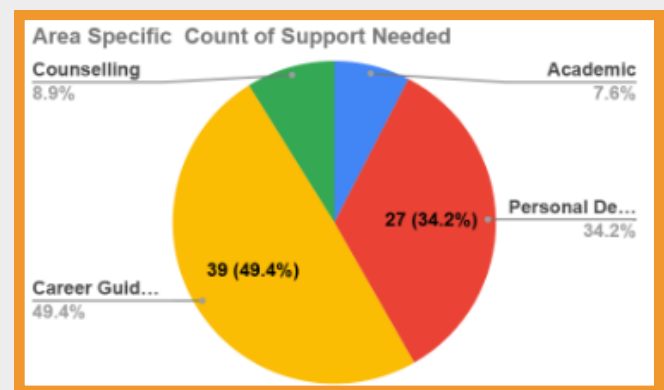
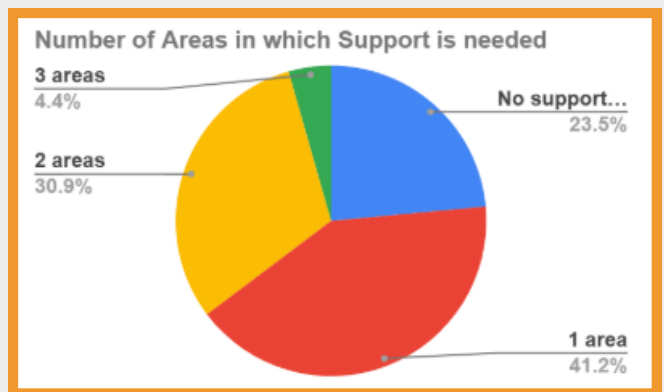
In its first biannual round, the entire SSF family came together to engage with 144 vivo scholars through thoughtful one-on-one conversations.

One key insight:

36% of scholars expressed a need for tailored guidance in academics, career planning, and personal development—highlighting the importance of moving beyond generic support.

In response, SSF is excited to announce the launch of two new programs:

- Mental Health Counseling
- Spoken English Support Sessions



We're truly inspired by the honesty of our scholars and the incredible engagement from our volunteers and staff. Thank you for helping us build a nurturing environment where every student feels heard, supported, and empowered to thrive.



Quarterly Highlights

Stories Corner

Gouramma

In our Stories Corner, we are thrilled to celebrate the exceptional achievements of Gouramma V Patil, one of SSF's brightest stars. Currently pursuing her MBBS at Vijayanagar Institute of Medical Sciences, Gouramma has accomplished something truly remarkable—earning distinction in all three years of her 5.5-year medical journey so far.



Her story is one of unwavering determination, focus, and deep-rooted purpose. Through late-night study sessions and early-morning clinical rounds, Gouramma embodies the spirit of perseverance and compassion—values we hold close at SSF.

As she steps into the final stretch of her medical education, we have no doubt she will continue to soar—not just as a doctor, but as a changemaker committed to giving back to her community with knowledge, kindness, and care.

We are incredibly proud of Gouramma and all our medical scholars who are transforming their dreams into a better tomorrow for others.

Priyadharshini

We are overjoyed to share a remarkable achievement from the Shooting Stars Foundation community. One of our talented scholars, Priyadharshini V., currently pursuing Electronics and Electrical Engineering (EEE) at Government College of Technology (GCT), Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, has recently released her very own book!



Titled “Priyadharshini’s VIVI LINES – What if unheard letters merged to breathe life?”, this heartfelt collection of poems and quotes explores powerful themes such as self-confidence, motivation, gratitude, and love. Through her words, Priyadharshini invites readers into her world—a world shaped by quiet moments of reflection, personal growth, unanswered questions, and the hope of being truly heard.

“

If a single line from this book comforts someone, gives them strength, or makes them pause, connect, and reflect, that’s all I wish for. ”

At SSF, we couldn’t be prouder of Priyadharshini for this incredible milestone. Her journey from student to published author is an inspiration to all of us, and we look forward to seeing where her creativity takes her next.

Congratulations, Priyadharshini, and may your words continue to inspire, uplift, and resonate with readers everywhere.

Quarterly Highlights

Upcoming Event

BIOINFORMATICS BOOTCAMP

SUMMER 2025



RISING 9 - 12
GRADES

RISING COLLEGE
FRESHMEN AND
SOPHOMORES

WHY JOIN ?

- ✓ Dive into genetics and data science
- ✓ Work on an impactful project for your resume
- ✓ Learn R and Python for bioinformatics
- ✓ Past program mentors - Amgen , UC Berkeley,



EARLY BIRD
OFFER

\$299 (REGISTER BY APR 15)

\$329(AFTER APR 15)

MORE INFO:

📅 JUNE 9th to JUNE 13th

🕒 11 AM TO 4 PM PST

📍 Online Via Zoom!

🎓 3rd YEAR OF CAMP

"I NEVER KNEW BIOLOGY AND COMPUTER SCIENCE
COULD BE INTERCONNECTED BEAUTIFULLY TO LEARN
GENETICS"

- KATHY - 11TH GRADE



Register Now: <https://bit.ly/436thjS>

Questions : support@sstarsfoundation.org

Quarterly Highlights

Placements



Gayatri Narendra Giradkar

Batch- 2025; BE, Instrumentation & Control Engineering
Government College of Engineering and Research Avasari Pune

Placed: Graduate Engineer Trainee, Adani Enterprises Ltd. (All India Pan)

"SSF played a crucial role in my journey. The financial assistance I received was invaluable. Moreover, SSF provided numerous personality development training that helped build my confidence, enabling me to perform well during my placement interviews"



Giridharan S

Batch- 2025; BE CSE., Computer Science & Engineering
Government College of Technology Coimbatore

Placed: Software Engineer, Visa, Bangalore

"More than the scholarship, the efforts the people in the SSF team through mentoring, self-improvement programs, providing an opportunity to volunteer has improved my confidence level"



Suvathi Sukanyaa K

Batch- 2025; BE., Electrical & Electronics Engineering
Alagappa Chettiar Government College of Engineering and Technology, Karaikudi

Placed: Associate Trainee, KYB Motorcycle Suspension India, PVT. LTD., Kancheepuram

"They have not only sponsored my education but also helped me to boost my confidence through several activities. Helped to improve my communication by some volunteering programs."



Kanak Sharma

Batch- 2025; B. Tech., Computer Science and Engineering
NIT Arunachal Pradesh

Placed: Software Engineer Intern, Experian, Hyderabad

"SSF and my donor provided crucial financial support that allowed me to focus fully on my studies and skill development without worrying about economic constraints. Their encouragement and belief in my potential greatly boosted my confidence throughout the journey"

Quarterly Highlights

SSF Spotlight: Q1 Awards



Vinu was recognized for ensuring smooth operations during challenging periods,



Bhumika was recognized for leading the Aptitude Training Program for over 100 participants,.



Rekha was recognized for the SSF Mentoring Program, onboarding 11 students and guiding 8 through self-learning sessions.



Nathisha was recognized for timely, accurate student document submissions and contributing to KPI calculations.



Khushi was recognized under the VIVO Ignite Technology & Innovation Initiative for her exceptional dedication and leadership skills.



Punith was recognized for the SSF Mentoring Program, onboarding 11 students and guiding 8 through self-learning sessions



These three alumni were recognized for their dedicated support for the Bangalore Alumni Meetup on February 23rd, 2025, which contributed to its success.

Join Hands with Us

At Shooting Stars Foundation, we believe every dream deserves a chance to shine. Through scholarships, mentorship, skill-building programs, and holistic support, we empower underprivileged youth across India to pursue higher education, secure meaningful employment, and become change-makers in their communities.

This year, your support has helped light up countless journeys— from remote villages to corporate boardrooms, from hardship to hope. But there are many more stars waiting to rise.

Adopt a Scholar – Give a student the wings to pursue education without financial barriers.

Volunteer with Us – Share your time, skills, and knowledge to guide our students toward a brighter future.

Partner Through CSR – Collaborate with us to create scalable, sustainable impact in education and skilling.

Sponsor STEM Events – Inspire young minds through hackathons, camps, and hands-on STEM programs.

Together, we can break the cycle of poverty through education and empowerment.

Be the spark. Help us ignite possibilities.



hello@sstarsfoundation.org



<https://shooting-stars-foundation.org/>



SHOOTING STARS
FOUNDATION

EDUATE | ENABLE | EMPOWER

