

Bangladeshi-born Rumman Chowdhury selected as US Science Envoy

March 18, 2024

Online Desk: The US Department of State has recently announced the selection of Dr Rumman Chowdhury, a Bangladeshi-origin Bengali American data scientist, as one of the four scientists to serve as a new U.S. Science Envoy in 2024. With this appointment, she has become a part of the first all-female cohort in the history of the US Science Envoy Program.

The other three scientists selected as new U.S. Science Envoys in 2024 are Dr Stephanie “Steffi” Diem, Assistant Professor in Nuclear Engineering and Engineering Physics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison); Dr Sian Proctor, a Geoscience Professor at the Maricopa Community Colleges, an Afrofuturism Space Artist, and an Astronaut; and Dr Dawn Wright, a geographer and oceanographer, Chief Scientist of the Environmental Systems Research Institute (Esri), and Courtesy Professor at Oregon State University.

The U.S. Science Envoy Program, established in 2010, aims to leverage the expertise and networks of eminent U.S. scientists and engineers to foster international cooperation in addressing challenges around the world. Through this program, scientists travel internationally as private U.S. citizens to engage with civil society and government representatives, facilitating science and technology cooperation.

According to an official press release by the U.S. Department of State, Dr Rumman Chowdhury brings a wealth of experience and expertise to her role as a Science Envoy. Currently serving as the CEO of Humane Intelligence, a technology nonprofit focused on evaluating artificial intelligence (AI) models, she has previously held key positions such as Director of the Machine Learning Ethics, Transparency, and Accountability (META) team at Twitter, and Global Lead for Responsible AI at Accenture Applied Intelligence.

As for academic qualifications, Dr Chowdhury holds two undergraduate degrees from MIT, a Master of Science in Quantitative Methods of the Social Sciences from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, San Diego. Her contributions to the field of AI ethics and accountability have earned her accolades such as Time Magazine’s 100 Most Influential People in AI and BBC’s 100 Women.

The press release adds that, as a U.S. Science Envoy, Dr Chowdhury will focus on advancing international cooperation in Artificial Intelligence. Her role will involve engaging with government officials, civil society, and the scientific community to identify opportunities for collaboration and promote ethical AI practices on a global scale.