



Ms. Neha Nitesh Hatwar, Senior Research Fellow (CSIR-NEERI) and Ph.D. Scholar (AcSIR), working with Dr. Asifa Qureshi, Scientist-F, CSIR-NEERI, made an oral presentation on "Metagenomic insights of landfill soil used for Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) biodegradation: A sustainable strategy for environmental remediation" at INNERVATE 2026-National Seminar on Recent Trends in Nanotechnology and Biodiversity Conservation, held on 20–21 January 2026, organized by Bajaj Science College, Wardha. She received the Best Oral Scientific Presentation Award for her research on PVC plastic bioremediation, addressing one of the most recalcitrant polymers due to its chlorine-rich structure and toxic additives. Her presentation focused on developing a process for the selective enrichment of microbial communities in PVC-buried soil, leading to a distinct shift in functional genes structure. This award-winning research significantly addressed microbial bioremediation of PVC and strengthened the scientific roadmap for sustainable plastic waste management and environmental conservation.