



# Students' Senate (2021-22) Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur



To consider a proposal for the formation of **Product Management Group**

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## **Vision**

Product bridges the gap between Industry Experience, Technical know-how, and Management skills. The group aims to cultivate Product enthusiasts of today into Product Leaders of tomorrow, facilitating networking and recruiting opportunities and empowering students to solve real-world problems. We envision building a strong Product community and strengthening the growing culture. This would also help students in understanding how product people (managers/designers/analysts) work and deal with all sorts of clients.

## **Motivation**

1. To create an experience outside the academic world for students that will enable them to develop their management and analytical skills by engaging in real-world problems.
2. Develop leadership and negotiation skills.
3. Improve presentation skills of students which will be an essential asset for all students when they enter the work environment after graduation.
4. Help prepare students for product case study competitions and interviews by giving them ample hands-on experience with product case studies.
5. Conduct workshops, information sessions, boot camps, mock interviews, and product case study competitions to bridge the gap between industry and college and help students interact with veterans from the industry.
6. To promote case competition culture in our institute by participating in case competitions such as IIMB Techzards, ProdTech IITB, etc.
7. There has been an increasing y.o.y growth in the number of students with 50+ students getting placed in product-related roles this year.



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## Preliminary Initiatives Taken

To build a PM community and start engaging with them, we conducted a number of preliminary events:

- 1) Established Discord community for IITK junta interested in product management. It is running actively with 250+ members.
- 2) Conducted PM Weekend on 28-29 May with the following two introductory events by IITK alumni:
  - a) Technical Roles in PM (28 May)
  - b) Concepts in PM (29 May)
- 3) Organized Product Design Webinar on 26 July.
- 4) Contacted a number of start-ups and NGOs for potential projects. Collaborated and took up problem statements of a start-up and provided end to end dashboard of analysed data and product research aiding them to make business decisions. Negotiations are underway to materialize further collaborations.
- 5) Conducted a PM Bootcamp and Mock Interviews with some of the top organisations in this industry(Doremon Den) to help students in preparing for internship/placements in products and related roles. The Bootcamp comprised of 11 live sessions by industry practitioners.
- 6) Professor Prerna Guatam([gprerna@iitk.ac.in](mailto:gprerna@iitk.ac.in)) has agreed to become the official faculty advisor for the Product Management Group.
- 7) Conducted a session on Product Management in collaboration with Cantilever Labs to assist the campus community prepare for product management roles in the placement season(10<sup>th</sup> September).
- 8) Prepared a collection of Product Decks and problem statements for the campus community interested in Product roles targeted mainly for the upcoming placement season.
- 9) Collaborated with an external body(Seekho) and conducted session on Product Management(7<sup>th</sup> November).
- 10) In talks with Product Space, for organising a 2-week long product case competition exclusively for IIT Kanpur student community, targeting Y20 and Y21 batches.



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- 11) Compiled data of Y17 and Y18 alums in product roles. This will further aid in our future placement and internship preparation sessions and decks preparations.
- 12) Preparing a Product Management Case Book which will be released soon for the campus community to aid in product role preparation. Our team will be further updating and improvising the same for the coming years.

Via these events and initiatives, we now have developed an active community and close-knit team interested in participating and conducting events for the to-be club.

### **Longer Term Initiatives Planned**

1. **Prod-o-mania:** an annual product development competition in IITK. The competition would be modeled along the lines of top Product hackathons. It will have three stages:
  - a. **Idea Stage:** At this stage, participants are expected to present their product/feature idea, do a business viability check and pitch why their idea is beneficial (in terms of increased profits or impact).
  - b. **Prototype Stage:** At this stage, participants must develop and present a complete wireframe of their product using non-code platforms like Figma.
  - c. **MVP Stage:** At this stage, participants must convert their product prototype to a functional and working product.

At each stage, each participating team will have to give a presentation and they will be evaluated and provided with constructive feedback by a panel of external judges. Depending on the number of participants, every stage can also be eliminated. Finally, the top 3 teams will be awarded based on ideation, prototype, and product quality.

2. **PM for Beginners:** We plan to organise a Bootcamp for freshers to give them an introductory understanding of product management right when they start off their college journey. This could be delivered across multiple sessions, with a mix of internal and external speakers.
3. **PM Blog series:** A monthly or bi-monthly blog series, wherein in each blog, our team would pick up an interesting real product and break down different technical, design, and business aspects of the product. This could also materialise into a newsletter in the longer term.
4. **Placement/Internship Preparation:**



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- a. Casebook: By collecting case round experiences of seniors, our team would work on building an exhaustive casebook that would help students to prepare better for the interviews.
  - b. Resume Review & Repository: A concerted effort will be made in collaboration with the Career Development wing of the AnC Council to make a repository of successful PM resumes and initiate a structured program to get resumes reviewed by experienced PMs in the industry.
  - c. Mock Interviews: We will contact alumni to conduct mock interviews to prepare students for acing PM interviews during placements.
5. Participating in Hackathons and Product competitions nationally and internationally: As a club, we would participate in top product competitions and hackathons as a team and share relevant opportunities with the entire campus junta.

## Initial Approach

We plan to do the following in the next couple of months to get the club going:

1. Recruitment of a core team (details on structure are given below)
2. Placement preparation for students sitting in Placements 2022
3. Collaborate with at least 2 to 3 organisations over a project
4. Prod-a-mania Edition 1 for Y22 freshers

## Composition & Structure

1. The core team will be a two-level hierarchy, headed by 3-4 leaders and followed by approximately 10-12 secretaries.
2. The core team will be responsible for the following tasks-
  - a. Project Procurement and Client Relations
  - b. Design & Web Development
  - c. Project Completion and Deliverables
  - d. Media and Publicity
  - e. Conducting Events
  - f. Constructing and updating a database of alumni in PM and engaging them in resume review & case prep initiatives described above



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3. The choice of the projects and the concerned organisations as well as the allocation of these projects to the student members of the group will be under the jurisdiction of the core team.
4. Selection of the successive leaders will be done by the present leaders. Selection of successive secretaries will be done by the new leaders.
5. In the longer term, as the number of projects increases and thereby, the quantum of work increases, the executive team might be divided into discrete verticals along the lines of the tasks mentioned above.

## **Funding**

Initially, the group will need to establish its credibility and brand in the market. For this duration (approx. first year), we will require Gymkhana to fund the group's activities. Initially, the main expenses will be logistical costs of conducting sessions and workshops, collaboration costs for external organisations, and registration costs for events and case competitions.

Once we have established the credibility of the group in the market, we will start asking the corporate clients for funding for the basic costs. We will still maintain our competitive edge as the cost will be minuscule as compared to other professional consulting services.

Approximate Budget: 20K

1. Expenses while collaborating with an external source
2. Conduction of awareness sessions and workshops