Proposals

for the post of Vice President,

Technology Students' Gymkhana,

Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur

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Proposal 1: Expanding Deferred Placement Policy & Enhancing CDC Query Resolution

Overview :

1. **Pressure amongst students to excel in campus placements:**
   There is a noticeable pressure on students to prioritize securing campus placements over exploring other career paths like working on their startups, applying for higher studies, preparing for competitive exams, or pursuing their passions as careers. This pressure arises from a lack of clear guidance and a fear of missing out on the placement process. Many students hesitate to deviate from the conventional route of campus recruitment because they are apprehensive about navigating the complexities of deferring placements or following their true interests. The current system for managing deferred placements is unclear, with limited awareness and few options for those seeking alternative career trajectories. As a result, students often find themselves in a dilemma, caught between conforming to the pressure of campus placements and pursuing their genuine interests and aspirations.

2. **Queries among students regarding compulsory internship and placement process** :
   The current system for managing placement-related inquiries and processes is riddled with inefficiencies, particularly in disseminating crucial information and resolving queries. Students often grapple with fundamental questions such as understanding the CDC's role, crafting effective resumes, and preparing for tests and interviews. The lack of a centralized FAQ system leads to confusion and misinformation. Moreover, CV preparation is a significant hurdle for many. Students are unsure about the necessary documentation, formatting standards, and content structuring, which are essential for creating impactful resumes.
   In the current scenario, FAQs related to the CDC are scattered, with no standardized pipeline for addressing the myriad issues faced by students seeking internships and placements

3. **Lack of proper channel for dissemination of CDC notices:**
   The current process of information dissemination related to CDC internships and placements is very inefficient, leading to multiple issues being faced by students during the whole process. Students can't check the noticeboard on ERP for CDC notifications, and present solutions like MFTP are also inefficient as students do not receive personalized emails from the companies they have applied for, alongside delays in receiving emails. These issues lead to a lot of chaos in managing the whole process for a student, who needs to keep track of all ongoing tests, interviews, and shortlists during the process alongside their preparations. This often leads to students missing important notifications

4. **Inefficient channels for urgent mass query resolutions for Placement Committee members:**
The Placement Committee members are stacked with multiple responsibilities during the internship and placement seasons, and resolving student queries becomes an inevitable part of their work. However, the current setup does not allow them to address urgent queries from students, like technical glitches or rescheduling of tests and interviews because of the lack of a proper channel to resolve these queries instantly. This problem leads to a lot of chaos amongst students facing such urgent issues, as well as poses a major challenge in front of Placement Committee members to resolve individual queries of a large number of students who might be facing the same issues.

Proposals:

1. **Expansion and Increased Awareness of Deferred Placements:**
Current awareness of the deferred placement policy among students is limited. Presently, this policy applies solely to Start-up Business Proposals, contingent upon the approval of the Dean(UG) or the Dean(PG). I propose an extension of the Deferred Placement policy to encompass opportunities in Higher Education and Competitive Examinations as well as exploring Offbeat career options like Photography and Filmmaking. This expansion aims to provide students with the flexibility to pursue advanced studies, prepare for significant competitive tests, or explore alternative career paths without forfeiting their placement opportunities. By broadening the scope of the deferred placement policy, we can better support the diverse career aspirations of our students and ensure they have the necessary time and resources to achieve their academic and professional goals.

Implementation:
- Certain Rules that can be implemented for the same:
  - The deferred placement option for the students will be open until 3 years from the date of completion of his/her academic program.
  - For Higher Education:
    - Students opting for higher studies and seeking a deferred placement must produce relevant documents that he/she has applied to various universities.
    - To sit for next year's placement season, the student must submit proof of rejection of their application from the applied Universities.
  - For Competitive Exams:
    - At the time of registering for the placements, the student must submit valid proof of their candidature for the Exam of at least any one of the gap years while applying for the consecutive placement season.

    ○   The CDC office will thoroughly scrutinize all the applications for deferred placement, and the decision of the Head of CDC will be final in matters related to deferred placement.

2. Personalized Notifications and Mass query resolution -

To streamline the communication process and ensure confidentiality, test and interview notifications for companies that students have applied to will be facilitated through the Apna Insti app. Additionally, the app will serve as a platform for students to receive prompt resolutions for mass queries related to CDC tests or interview processes from the placement committee.

Implementation:

- The platform will leverage the ERP's API to cross-check student profiles and extract data from the CDC module of ERP and CDC noticeboard.
    - Test and interview notifications will be delivered to students through the Apna Insti app, ensuring timely and convenient communication.
    - The notifications and updates will be personalized based on the companies applied and their shortlists for the test and interview process.
    - The notifications will not reveal the company details due to confidentiality concerns. Instead, they will prompt students to log into the institute's ERP system for more detailed information about the specific companies they have applied to.
    - The POC for each company from the placement committee will be responsible for monitoring the process and responding promptly to the queries raised by students during the test and interview process.

- The placement committee will have the ability to send mass notifications or announcements through the Apna Insti app, addressing common concerns or providing important updates related to the internship/placement processes.

- Interactive Career Support and FAQ Optimization Initiative **-**
    - At the commencement of the internship and placement season, the Career Development Centre (CDC) will distribute digital forms to students, prompting them to document any challenges or questions they encounter throughout the process.
    - Gather the submitted forms and categorize the issues raised by students. We are going to collaborate with the Career Development Centre Department Representatives to address and resolve the most critical and pertinent issues, offering suitable solutions.

○ Create a distinct section on the APNA INSTI application specifically for resume building on the ERP portal which is going to offer explicit guidelines and specifications over it.
○ Incorporate the solutions into an FAQ section that is updated regularly within the app by making sure the FAQs are sorted into categories and easy-to-find solutions.

Impact:

1. Expansion and Increased Awareness of Deferred Placements:
   ● By broadening the scope of the deferred placement policy, students will gain the flexibility to pursue advanced studies, competitive examinations, or alternative career paths alongside startup ventures without the pressure of missing out on placement opportunities. This initiative not only aligns with diverse career aspirations but also empowers students to make choices that best suit their long-term goals without the fear of immediate consequences on their professional placements.
   ● The implementation of this policy will enhance student satisfaction and reduce the stress associated with making immediate career decisions upon graduation. It acknowledges and supports the variety of career paths that students might wish to explore, including those outside the traditional campus placement process. This supportive environment fosters a culture of exploration, innovation, and personal growth among the student body.
2. Personalized Notifications and Mass Query Resolution:
   ● The introduction of a streamlined communication process through the Apna Insti app will significantly improve the efficiency and reliability of receiving placement-related notifications. By ensuring that students receive timely and personalized information, the system reduces anxiety and confusion surrounding the placement process. This direct communication channel aids in better preparation for interviews and tests, contributing to potentially higher success rates in placements.
   ● The ability to resolve mass queries quickly and efficiently will greatly benefit both students and the placement committee. It will minimize misinformation, reduce redundancy in addressing common concerns, and allow for smoother coordination of the placement process. This enhancement in communication will lead to a more organized and less chaotic placement season, ultimately improving the overall experience for all parties involved.

Groundwork:

1. In my quest to craft a robust framework for expanding the deferred placement policy, I undertook a detailed compilation and analysis of similar policies from other prestigious institutions, including IIT Kanpur, IIT Roorkee, IIT Delhi, and IIT Guwahati. This analysis aimed to

extract best practices and insights from their successful implementations, providing a solid benchmark for our own policy enhancement efforts.

Link:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NQF2q8p7mttFg-TpAY_dYiuzoCc9A-Y0hHafhHmiI1Q/edit?usp=sharing

2. Following this, I facilitated discussions with members of the placement committee to garner a wide array of perspectives on how we might broaden our existing deferred placement policy. The feedback from these discussions was overwhelmingly positive, indicating strong support for the current policy framework and its potential expansion.

3. I carried out an extensive survey among students to identify the precise challenges they encounter with notifications and query resolution related to placements and internships. This investigation revealed specific issues with the notification system. Additionally, I collected insights from placement committee members, highlighting inefficiencies in the existing process.

4. To address the challenges identified in our comprehensive student survey regarding placement and internship-related notifications and query resolutions, I initiated discussions with the advisors of the Developers' Society, IIT Kharagpur. The focus was to evaluate whether the APNA INSTI application possesses the necessary framework to incorporate the required functionalities for personalized notifications and effective mass query resolutions. The advisors confirmed that integrating these new features into the platform is indeed feasible, projecting a completion timeline of approximately two months.

5. Further advancing our groundwork, I reached out to Mr. Bishal Gupta, a Junior Technician/Junior Laboratory Assistant at Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), to discuss the availability of API of the ERP system to fetch data for integration with the app. This integration is crucial for accessing up-to-date notifications and information by pulling relevant data directly from the ERP system, including details about student enrollments in various companies and profiles. He confirmed the existence of an ERP API capable of fetching these crucial details, thereby laying a solid foundation for our proposed enhancements.

Proposal 2: Postgraduate Students and Research Scholars Empowerment

Overview :

IIT Kharagpur has long been committed to providing an exceptional educational experience and fostering an environment conducive to academic and research excellence. However, feedback from various stakeholders, including postgraduate (PG) students and research scholars (RS), has highlighted several areas where additional support and resources are needed to enhance the overall experience for this critical segment of the institute's population. After consulting with stakeholders, including PG students, and research scholars, the following observations have been made:

1. **Lack of a detailed and structured induction program for incoming Post Graduate students:**
   Incoming postgraduate students encounter a significant transitional challenge as they join IIT Kharagpur. Unlike undergraduate students who receive a dedicated and structured induction program, PG students need a comprehensive orientation to familiarize themselves with the campus environment, available resources, and support services. Consequently, they need to familiarize themselves with many aspects of life at IIT Kharagpur, making it difficult for them to acclimate to the campus and participate fully in various activities.

2. **Disconnect between senior and junior Postgraduate students**:
   The postgraduate student community faces a lack of inter-batch bonding due to several reasons.
   - 1st and 2nd year girl PG students being allotted different halls of residence
   - Lack of senior-junior bonding culture among PG students
   - Lack of proper channels to help juniors and transfer knowledge related to campus and academics

   Because of these reasons, the incoming PG students do not get to connect with their seniors easily, leading to multiple issues in getting acclimated to the campus, their hall of residence, and their department.

3. **Lack of a proper repository to store and access academic help material for PG students:**
   The Postgraduate students face difficulties in academics due to the lack of a dedicated channel that stores notes, previous year questions, details about specific courses, and their grading. Previous year question papers for various Centres and Schools are not readily available, even on the Central Library website, which makes them inaccessible to the students. While the UG students currently have various channels to access these materials that aid in their academics, the Postgraduate students face difficulties because of lack of access to these resources, alongside less interaction with their seniors to avail their help.

4. **Difficulty in slot booking for access to Central Research Facility(CRF):**
The Research Scholars currently face issues in booking slots for conducting research experiments at the Central Research Facility (CRF). The current slot booking process is very long and opaque, which involves getting approval from the concerned facilitators, initiating payment, and then being allotted slots to access the research facilities. This process is not transparent and efficient for Research Scholars who need regular access to the research laboratories and facilities at CRF, as there is no certainty on the time it will take to get a slot allotted from the research laboratories, leading to a slowdown of their research work.

Proposals:

1. **Department Mentor-mentee allotment for PG students -**
To address the disconnect between senior and junior PG students, a departmental mentor-mentee program will be implemented. This initiative aims to facilitate a smooth transition for incoming PG students and foster a strong support system within each department.

   Implementation:
   - The Department Post Graduate Representatives will circulate a form among existing PG students in their department, inviting them to volunteer as mentors for the upcoming batch of incoming students.
   - Interested senior PG students will be allotted a group of 4-6 incoming students from the same department as their mentees.
   - The mentor-mentee groups will be formed before the commencement of the academic year, allowing mentors and mentees to establish initial contact.
   - Mentors will be responsible for guiding their mentees through the following:
     - Familiarize them with the department's facilities, labs, and resources.
     - Sharing insights about coursework, grading patterns, and academic expectations.
     - Providing advice on time management, study techniques, and work-life balance.
     - Introducing them to campus life, extracurricular activities, and support services.
     - Addressing any concerns or queries the mentees may have.
   - Regular mentor-mentee meetings and check-ins will be scheduled to ensure effective mentorship and support throughout the academic year.

2. **Detailed and structured PG induction program -**
To ensure a smooth transition and comprehensive orientation for incoming postgraduate (PG) students, a detailed and structured 2-day PG induction program will be implemented, similar to the existing undergraduate (UG) induction program.
The PG induction program will consist of the following components:

- **Campus Orientation:**
  - Introduction to the institute's history, values, and culture.
  - Familiarization with campus facilities, including the central library, sports complexes, and healthcare services.
  - Overview of Technology Students' Gymkhana, student organizations, clubs, and extracurricular opportunities.
- **Academic Orientation:**
  - Introduction to the respective departments, faculty members, and academic advisors.
  - Detailed information about coursework, grading systems, and academic policies.
  - Guidance on research opportunities, thesis/dissertation guidelines, and academic resources.
- **Support Services Orientation:**
  - Introduction to counseling and wellness services available on campus.
  - Information about financial aid, scholarships, and assistantships.
- **Safety and Awareness Sessions:**
  - Sensitization on issues such as gender equality, inclusivity, and mental health.
  - Training on laboratory safety protocols and responsible research practices.
  - Awareness about campus security measures and emergency procedures.
- **Career prospects and mentorship opportunities:**
  - Overview of career development resources and placement opportunities.

3. **Central academic help repository for PG and RS students -**
   To address the lack of a dedicated resource for academic materials and facilitate knowledge sharing among postgraduate (PG) students and Research Scholars(RS), a centralized academic help repository will be established. This repository will serve as a comprehensive platform for accessing course materials, previous year's question papers, and other academic resources, managed and updated regularly by the PG department representatives and student volunteers. This repository will also be helpful for dual degree students in their final year.

   Implementation:
   - A central domain will be created to host the academic help repository, ensuring easy access and discoverability for UG and PG students across all departments.
   - The repository will be organized by department, course, and semester, allowing students to easily navigate and find the relevant materials.
   - PG and RS department representatives will be responsible for coordinating the collection and uploading of academic resources from their respective departments.
   - The repository will be regularly promoted and advertised across various channels like Email to increase awareness and encourage contributions from students across batches.

4. **Increasing transparency of the slot booking process of CRF -**

To streamline and enhance the efficiency of the slot booking process for the Central Research Facility (CRF) and make the process more transparent, a digitized system will be implemented through the institute's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform. This proposal involves a list of available slots for the laboratories in the CRF to be made visible while initiating the slot booking process. The Research Scholar would be able to select and initiate booking for the slot that would be suitable according to their schedule, and expedite the process of slot booking.

Impact:

1. **Department Mentor-Mentee Allotment for PG Students:**
   Incoming PG students will benefit from a structured support system, facilitating their seamless integration into the department, campus environment, and academic life.
   - Senior PG students will have the opportunity to develop mentorship skills and contribute to the growth of their juniors, fostering a sense of community within the department.

2. **Detailed and Structured PG Induction Program:**
   - Incoming PG students will receive a comprehensive orientation, equipping them with essential information about academic expectations, research facilities, support services, and campus resources.
   - The induction program will promote a smoother transition, enabling PG students to navigate the academic and social aspects of their postgraduate journey more effectively.

3. **Central Academic Help Repository for PG Students:**
   - Students will have access to a centralized and well-organized platform for accessing course materials, previous year questions, and notes, enhancing their academic preparation and performance.
   - Knowledge sharing and collaboration among PG students across departments will be facilitated, fostering a culture of peer learning and support.

4. **Increasing transparency of the Slot Booking Process of CRF:**
   - Research Scholars will experience a streamlined and efficient process for booking slots at the Central Research Facility, making the process more transparent. This way, the Research Scholars would be able to use the research facilities more efficiently as they would be aware of the time after which they would be able to access the facilities. This would remove the ambiguity surrounding the availability of slots for accessing the research facilities at CRF.
   - This proposal will also help in increasing the transparency of the whole process, as the Research Scholars would be able to view the available slots before initiating the booking process. This would help them better plan their schedule as per the availability of slots, and help them expedite their research work.

Groundwork:

1. I contacted multiple PG students to ask about their grievances related to academics and campus life. One of the biggest concerns pointed out by PG students is that they remain unaware of the Institute's facilities and amenities for a large part of their first year due to a lack of proper induction or guidance from seniors. Another issue that they face is the access to academic resources, especially for courses in Centres and Schools that do not offer UG courses.
2. I contacted the Institute RS Representative and multiple RS students to ask about their grievances, the major concern was the slot booking process of the Central Research Facility. The current process of slot booking is very time-intensive and unoptimized, which leads to a lot of difficulty for RS students, especially those who are required to use the facilities of CRF regularly.
3. I contacted the Institute PG Representative to discuss the grievances of the PG students and my proposals to address them, and these were his inputs on the proposals -
   - He gave a positive response to the Mentor-Mentee proposal as the incoming PG students have a lot of queries with regard to the department and coursework, and getting suitable guidance from their senior PG students would help them.
   - He stated that the PG Induction program proposal will be a good step towards making PG students more inclusive in the IIT Kharagpur student community by making them more aware of the institute. He also suggested that the Induction Programme need not be as extensive as the UG Induction, as the PG students have already experienced college life. He also suggested that the Induction Handbook that was shared with the UG students during their Induction Programme in 2023, can be shared with the PG and RS students as well so that important details related to the institute are handy to them.
   - He gave a positive response to the proposal of building a Central Academic Help repository for students. He suggested that the repository need not be restricted only to the PG students as it can be beneficial to the final year students of dual degree courses enrolled in courses in the same department as well.
4. I discussed with the Head of the Student Welfare Group, IIT Kharagpur regarding the proposal implementation, and he was affirmative of its impact.

Proposal 3: Fostering safety and inclusivity for Women and Gender Minorities

Overview:

The Institute Women's Council and Ambar- the official LGBTQIA+ Support group of IIT Kharagpur- have done a phenomenal job throughout the years in uplifting and resolving issues of women and gender minorities. Yet, there is a significant opportunity to develop systems in place to support women, have a progressive outlook, and extend similar support to the LGBTQIA+ community on campus. Upon speaking to multiple stakeholders, the Institute Women's Council and the LGBTQIA+ student community, multiple issues have been highlighted where they, as a community have lacked representation, and inclusivity, and felt the need for better grievance redressal systems. A few major grievances have been listed below:

1. **Lack of Proper Grievance Redressal Platform for LGBTQIA+ Community:**
   Upon speaking to multiple students of the LGBTQIA+ Community on campus, we learned that there needs to be a proper platform to address queries and grievances of the community, which represents a critical gap in ensuring inclusivity and support within our institution. Without a dedicated mechanism, individuals within this community face challenges in seeking guidance, reporting discrimination or harassment, or accessing relevant resources. This absence not only hinders their ability to address specific concerns effectively but also signals to prioritize the needs and rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals, leading to feelings of exclusion and mistrust within the community.

2. **Inadequate Psychological Support for Women and LGBTQIA+ at Counseling Centre:**
   The existing Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) is tasked with resolving complaints of harassment, bullying, and sexual assault among women students. However, a significant gap exists in the support system as victims undergo the complaint process. The absence of a rule mandating psychological support, such as access to professional counselors, exacerbates the challenges faced by victims. Without such support, victims may experience heightened psychological distress, anxiety, and trauma throughout the complaint resolution journey.

   The psychological support provided to the LGBTQIA+ on campus by the counseling center also requires improvements. There have been incidences wherein the issues of their community haven't been handled sensitively by the counselors. Students have felt that the counseling center can be better equipped to deal with sensitive issues when it comes to the gender or sexual orientation of an individual.

3. **Lack of a proper public policy to address the ICC and grievances of Queer Community**:
   While the full extent of assault, bullying, and discrimination targeting women and gender minorities on campus remains undetermined, concerns have been raised about the potential vulnerabilities these groups may face. The apparent lack of established public policies, rules, or a dedicated committee specifically addressing grievances encountered by the queer community has drawn attention to the need for structured mechanisms. Without such avenues, LGBTQIA+ individuals could feel unsupported and at risk of discrimination or violence, exacerbating the challenges they confront. Even the perception of an inadequate support system can adversely impact marginalized groups' well-being and sense of safety within the campus community.

Proposal:

1. **Develop and publicize a policy documentation to handle complaints of Women and Gender Minorities:**
   To address the longstanding gaps and ensure fair and inclusive procedures for handling complaints from women and gender minorities, a dedicated and exhaustive policy documentation will be developed and widely publicized. This initiative aims to create a safe and supportive environment where individuals from these communities feel empowered to report incidents of discrimination, harassment, or misconduct without fear of prejudice or neglect.

   Policy Documentation:

   - **Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) Policy**: A detailed policy documentation will be developed in consultation with the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), outlining the procedures, guidelines, and best practices for addressing complaints from women and gender minorities. This policy will acknowledge and prioritize the unique concerns and challenges faced by these communities within the institutional setting.
   - **LGBTQIA+ Community Policy**: Recognizing the discrimination, harassment, and marginalization often faced by the LGBTQIA+ community, a separate policy document will be created to address their specific needs and concerns. This policy will be grounded on fundamental rights of the LGBTQIA+ Community like the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 and the Rights of Transgender Persons Bill, 2014. This policy will serve as a comprehensive framework for handling complaints related to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
   - **Legal Frameworks and Best Practices**: The policy documentation will incorporate relevant legal frameworks, institutional policies, and best practices in handling complaints from women and gender minorities. This will ensure compliance with

existing laws and regulations of the institute while promoting a culture of respect, equality, and non-discrimination.

- **Training and Awareness**: Comprehensive training and awareness programs, similar to the session on Gender Sensitization will be implemented for all relevant stakeholders and the broader institutional community. These programs will focus on sensitizing individuals to the unique challenges faced by women and gender minorities, fostering understanding and empathy, and equipping them with the necessary skills to handle complaints effectively and sensitively.

2. **Specialized Training for Counsellors on Sexual Assault Support and Queer Affirmative Counseling:**
   To better support survivors of sexual assault and effectively address the unique needs of the LGBTQIA+ community, specialized training will be provided to counselors at the center. This initiative aims to equip counselors with the necessary knowledge, skills, and sensitivity to provide culturally competent and trauma-informed care.

   Sexual Assault Support Training:
   - **Trauma-Informed Care**: Counselors will receive comprehensive training on trauma-informed care, which involves understanding the impact of trauma on individuals, particularly survivors of sexual assault. This approach prioritizes safety, empowerment, and a non-judgmental environment to promote healing and recovery.
     Eg:2-day curriculum teaches advocates about advocacy/counseling, the realities and impact of sexual assault, procedures to follow in common situations, techniques to support recovery, and compassion fatigue and self-care by the National Sexual Violence Resource Centre.
   - **Survivor-centered Approach**: The training will emphasize a survivor-centered approach, ensuring that counselors are equipped to provide support and resources tailored to the specific needs and experiences of each individual. This includes understanding the dynamics of sexual assault, recognizing the impact of trauma on mental health, and providing appropriate coping strategies.
   - **Procedures and Techniques**: Counselors will be trained on established procedures and techniques for supporting survivors of sexual assault. This includes crisis intervention, safety planning, advocacy, and ongoing counseling to facilitate the recovery process.
   - **Self-Care and Compassion Fatigue**: Recognizing the emotional toll of working with trauma survivors, the training will address self-care strategies and techniques to prevent compassion fatigue among counselors, ensuring their well-being and sustained ability to provide effective support.

   Queer Affirmative Counseling Training:

- **Queer Affirmative Counseling Practices**: Counselors will undergo training in Queer Affirmative Counseling Practices (QACP), which emphasize an affirming and inclusive approach to working with LGBTQIA+ individuals. This training will cover topics such as understanding diverse gender identities and sexual orientations, addressing unique challenges faced by the community, and creating a safe and inclusive counseling environment.
  Eg: 6-day Certificate Course on Queer Affirmative Counseling Practice (QACP) Online by Mariwala Health Initiative
- **Intersectionality and Cultural Competence**: The training will explore the intersectionality of identities, acknowledging that individuals may face multiple forms of discrimination or marginalization based on their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or other identities. Counselors will learn to provide culturally competent care that respects and validates diverse experiences.

3. **Create a Queer Grievance Form managed by GSec Welfare and a student representative, with orientation sessions for GSec Welfare -**
To address the lack of a dedicated platform for the LGBTQIA+ community to report grievances and seek support, a Queer Grievance Form will be introduced. This form will be managed by the General Secretary of Students' Welfare and a student representative from the LGBTQIA+ community, ensuring confidentiality and appropriate handling of sensitive matters.

Implementation:

- **Confidential Reporting Platform:** The Queer Grievance Form will be accessible to all students, providing a safe and secure space for LGBTQIA+ individuals to report any grievances, concerns, or issues they may be facing on campus.
- **Anonymous Reporting Option:** The form will offer an anonymous reporting option, allowing individuals to submit their grievances without revealing their identity. This feature aims to encourage more individuals to come forward, especially those who may feel hesitant or fear repercussions for reporting.
- **Selective Disclosure Option:** Alternatively, individuals can choose to disclose their identity to a select group of individuals, such as the GSec Welfare and the student representative, ensuring that their concerns are addressed discreetly and with utmost sensitivity.
- **Orientation Sessions for stakeholders:** To ensure that the General Secretary of Students' Welfare is adequately prepared to handle queer-specific grievances with sensitivity and competence, comprehensive orientation sessions will be conducted. These sessions will cover topics such as LGBTQIA+ awareness, inclusive language, and appropriate response strategies, equipping the GSec Welfare with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide effective support.
- **Collaboration with Counseling Centre:** The GSec Welfare and the student representative will collaborate closely with the Counseling Centre to provide psychological support and

counseling services specifically tailored to the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community, as required.

- **Confidentiality and Privacy:** Strict confidentiality and privacy measures will be implemented to protect the identities and personal information of those who submit grievances through the Queer Grievance Form, ensuring a safe and trustworthy environment for reporting and seeking support.

Impact:

1. **Developing and publicizing a policy to handle complaints of Women and Gender Minorities:**
   - Making the policy accessible to all stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators, ensures clarity regarding the complaint resolution process, available support mechanisms, and avenues for seeking redress. This transparency not only builds trust but also encourages active participation in upholding a culture of respect and inclusivity.
   - It would ensure that complaints are investigated impartially, victims are treated with dignity and respect, and appropriate actions are taken to address systemic issues contributing to discrimination or harassment.
2. **Provide specialized training to counselors at the center to address sexual assault and support the Queer Community effectively:**
   - This training would equip counselors with skills in cultural competency, and advocacy, leading to improved mental health outcomes and a safer, more inclusive environment for all.
   - Appointing a specialized counselor to provide trauma-informed care to the victim would help in the long run in helping the victim cope with the trauma and mental well-being.
3. **Creating a Queer Grievance Form managed by GSec Welfare and a student representative, with orientation sessions for GSec Welfare:**
   - Having a dedicated Queer Grievance Form ensures that LGBTQIA+ individuals have a confidential and safe space to report any concerns or experiences of discrimination, harassment, or marginalization they may face within the academic community
   - Conducting orientation sessions for GSec Welfare further enhances their understanding of queer-specific challenges, cultural nuances, and appropriate response protocols

Groundwork:

I have talked to Ms. Keerthy GS, Institute Women Representative, and Ms. Roopsa Sen, ex-governor of Ambar, and conducted certain student surveys regarding the feasibility of the proposals, and these were the suggestions/responses:

1. Although there is a website that describes the Internal Complaints Committee, there is no proper documentation or an "Institute Policy" briefing out the ground rules and regulations which can be referred to by the student community of the campus.
2. The ICC is specified to Women on the campus (be it students, staff, or professors), and is designated under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. However, there are certain ground rules and policies by the government of India for the LGBTQIA+ community, like Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 and the Rights of Transgender Persons Bill, 2014 based on which, we need to have a complaint committee to address the issues faced by the LGBTQIA+ community of the campus.
3. Upon speaking to certain LGBTQIA+ members of the student fraternity, I discovered that there is no portal or a systemized policy/ ground rules ensuring their safety on campus.
4. The LGBTQIA+ Community hasn't been fully convinced with the current facilities of the counseling center, with the counselors lacking the necessary training required to deal with the community and their perspectives
5. On speaking to Ms.Keerthy, I found out that whenever a victim comes up with a complaint of abuse sexual assault, or any other form of grievance, there is no psychological support offered to the victim to deal with the situation.
6. Queer Affirmative Counseling Practices have been followed and encouraged by many counselors and psychologists in India and abroad and certain courses are being offered to encourage these practices. Eg: 6-day Certificate Course on Queer Affirmative Counseling Practice (QACP) Online by Mariwala Health Initiative
Source:https://mhi.org.in/voice/details/6-day-certificate-course-queer-affirmative-counselling-practice-qacp-online/
7. Similar courses to train psychologists and counselors to deal with victims of abuse and assault to provide timely assistance to them have been globally encouraged. Eg:2-day curriculum teaches advocates about advocacy/counseling, the realities and impact of sexual assault, procedures to follow in common situations, techniques to support recovery, and compassion fatigue and self-care by the National Sexual Violence Resource Centre.
Source: https://www.ovcttac.gov/saaspt/index.cfm
8. I referred to the official policy document by the Gender Cell of the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay on Prevention, Prohibition and Redress of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace with its attendant rules and procedures for reference.

Proposal 4: Research Expedition

Overview:

Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur, has long been renowned for its excellence in research and innovation. Over the years, it has emerged as a vibrant hub for cutting-edge research activities, attracting scholars, scientists, and innovators from across the globe.

The research ecosystem at IIT Kharagpur is characterized by its multidisciplinary approach, with faculty members and students often collaborating across departments and disciplines to tackle complex real-world challenges. Whether it's in the fields of engineering, science, humanities, or management, researchers at IIT Kharagpur are encouraged to think creatively, push the boundaries of their fields, and develop innovative solutions to pressing global problems.

IIT Kharagpur's esteemed research facilities, such as the Rubber Technology Centre and the Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence, form the backbone of the Research Expedition. To tackle urgent problems and investigate uncharted territory in their respective domains, these centers embody state-of-the-art knowledge and infrastructure.

To promote cooperation through cooperative research projects, the Research Expedition will bring together industry research specialists from various backgrounds. The Expedition aims to spark multidisciplinary research projects and initiatives by bringing these experts to campus to engage with teachers and students.

Apart from partnering with industry professionals, the Research Expedition will include activities that promote research among university students. These consist of research speeches, conferences, research alumni talks, and writing contests for research literature. By encouraging students to participate in worthwhile research projects, these gatherings hope to foster an innovative and exploratory atmosphere within the organization.

Implementation:

1. **Event 1 - InnovateX**

   Research Presentation Showcase: "InnovateX"

In the Research Expedition, we will have a groundbreaking event within the conference framework: the InnovateX Research Presentation Showcase. This event is designed to provide researchers with a unique platform to present their cutting-edge work in a concise and engaging format, akin to the popular "3 Minute Thesis" style which is an active event in top institutes like IIT Delhi and The University of Queensland.

Researchers from diverse disciplines and backgrounds will have the opportunity to showcase their research findings, methodologies, and innovations to a wide audience of peers, industry professionals, and potential collaborators. Each presenter will have a limited time frame to deliver a compelling overview of their research, emphasizing its significance, methodology, and potential impact.

InnovateX aims to foster a culture of concise and impactful communication within the research community, encouraging researchers to distill complex ideas into clear and engaging presentations. By participating in this event, researchers will not only enhance their communication skills but also gain valuable exposure for their work, potentially leading to new collaborations, funding opportunities, and recognition within their field.

This event will complement the broader objectives of the Research Expo by providing a platform for researchers to showcase their work and engage with a diverse audience. InnovateX promises to be an exciting addition to the conference program, highlighting the innovative research happening within the IIT Kharagpur community and beyond.

Timeline-

This competition shall be conducted on day 1 of the Research Expedition from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. to incorporate the research showcase from a maximum number of participants. Every participant shall be given 5 minutes to showcase their research and there will be 5 minutes of cross-questioning by the judges.

2. **Event 2 - Knowledge Nexus: Research Talk Series**

This is a Research Talk Event featuring esteemed experts, successful KGP alumni currently contributing to Research and Development in various industries, and scientists from renowned organizations like ISRO, DRDO, and BARC, and our esteemed alumni who are leading in the Research and Development (R&D) department of different companies and distinguished professors from foreign universities. The event will consist of online/offline research talks held during the expedition.

During these sessions, speakers will delve into their journeys of becoming researchers, shedding light on what a day in the researcher's life looks like, their professional journey, and the impact they are creating in the real world through their research.

Overall, sessions focusing on the journeys of becoming researchers can provide valuable insights, inspiration, and practical guidance to attendees as they embark on their own research journeys.

Timeline-

There will be two research talk sessions planned on day 1. The very first session shall be organized from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and the second research talk session will be organized from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

3. **Event 3 - Department Wise Research Showcase**

This event will have professors from different departments showcasing the research work in the particular department. This will not only showcase the research to industry experts fostering more funding but also help the student community understand the different research topics in different departments, schools, and centers to best pick the project for their B-tech project(10 Credits) and M-tech project (25 Credits)

Timeline-

Group Number	Time
1	8:00 A.M - 10:00 A.M
2	10:00 A.M - 12:00 P.M
3	2:00 P.M - 4:00 P.M
4	4:00 P.M - 6:00 P.M
5	6:00 P.M - 8:00 P.M

We have a total of 20 Departments, 23 Centres, and 11 Schools which we will divide into groups of 5 and have their research sessions running parallely in the respective slot allotted to that group.

Here even if one is interested in two research sessions that are clashing; he or she will be made available with the recording of the session.

Impact:

Impact on IIT Kharagpur:

1. Enhances reputation: Hosting a successful Research Expedition enhances IIT Kharagpur's reputation as a leading research institution and strengthens its position as a hub for innovation and collaboration.

2. Attracts talent: The opportunity to engage in cutting-edge research projects and interact with industry experts attracts top talent, including faculty members, students, and research scholars, to IIT Kharagpur.

3. Industry partnerships: Collaborating with industry professionals through the Research Expedition strengthens IIT Kharagpur's industry partnerships and enhances its ability to transfer research findings into practical applications.

Impact on Students:

1. Exposure to research: Students participating in the Research Expedition gain exposure to cutting-edge research topics, methodologies, and industry trends. This exposure can inspire them to pursue research careers and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their chosen fields.

2. Networking opportunities: Students have the opportunity to interact with industry professionals, faculty members, and fellow students from diverse backgrounds. These networking opportunities can lead to internships, research collaborations, and mentorship opportunities, which are valuable for their academic and professional development.

3. Skill development: Participating in research speeches, conferences, and writing contests helps students develop critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills. These skills are essential for success in both academic and professional settings, which might further increase their prospects of getting into the core companies of their department.

Proposal 5: Startup Summer: Cultivating Entrepreneurial Endeavors

Overview:

Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur recognizes the paramount importance of providing practical experience and fostering entrepreneurial spirit among its students. In alignment with this strategic vision, this proposal seeks to introduce a pivotal provision allowing students to work on their startup ventures during their internship period. By fostering a conducive environment for entrepreneurship, the proposal aims to empower students to delve into innovative ventures, gain invaluable practical experience, and contribute to the burgeoning innovation ecosystem.

1. **Current Evaluation Criteria:**
   - UG and Dual Degree Students at IIT Kharagpur undergo mandatory industrial training after their 6th or 8th semester respectively, which is a crucial component of their academic curriculum.
   - The evaluation process predominantly revolves around students' performance during their industry internships, assessing factors such as technical competency, professional conduct, and project execution.
   - However, the existing evaluation framework lacks provisions for students to explore and cultivate entrepreneurial aspirations by working on their startup ventures during this period.

2. **Student Interest in Entrepreneurship:**
   - Many engineering students at IIT Kharagpur have a growing interest in Entrepreneurship and Innovation.
   - A large group of students is very enthusiastic about developing and nurturing their startup ideas, driven by a passion for innovation and a desire to create a real impact.
   - Many students actively look for opportunities to improve their entrepreneurial skills and turn their innovative ideas into successful business ventures, using their academic knowledge and creativity.
   - The current academic curriculum does not allow students to get dedicated time to work on their startup ideas, because of ongoing semesters, compulsory summer internships, and BTP/MTP.

Proposals:

1. **Evaluation Criteria Expansion:**
I propose to Introduce a provision for students to work on their startup ventures during their industrial training period. Under this proposal, students will have the option to submit their startup ideas to a designated professor at RMSoEE (Rajendra Mishra School of Engineering Entrepreneurship) for approval. Upon approval, students will be eligible to work on their startup during the internship period and will be evaluated based on the progress and outcomes of their startup venture.

   Implementation:
   ● Students submit startup ideas through standardized application forms to RMSoEE, streamlining the submission process and ensuring consistency.
   ● RMSoEE faculty evaluates ideas based on critical factors such as feasibility, innovation, market potential, and alignment with institute objectives, ensuring thorough scrutiny.
   ● Approved ideas progress to development during the summer internship period.
   ● Comprehensive guidelines are provided for documenting startup activities to facilitate clear reporting and tracking of progress.
   ● Evaluation criteria are seamlessly integrated into the existing industrial training assessment framework.
   ● An assessment panel comprising RMSoEE faculty offers valuable feedback, guiding student development and project refinement.
   ● Feedback mechanisms are established to gather insights from students, mentors, and evaluators, promoting continuous improvement and excellence in entrepreneurial endeavors.

Impact:

1. **Empowering Student Entrepreneurs:**
   ● By allowing students to work on their own startup ventures during their internship period, this initiative empowers them to take ownership of their entrepreneurial endeavors and transform innovative ideas into tangible businesses.
   ● Students gain practical experience in entrepreneurship, including market analysis, product development, strategic planning, and resource management, equipping them with valuable skills for future entrepreneurial pursuits.

2. **Enhancing Academic Preparedness:**

- Working on startup ventures during their internship period provides students with hands-on experience in applying theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, enhancing their academic preparedness and bridging the gap between theory and practice.
- Engaging in entrepreneurial activities fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, augmenting students' academic development and preparing them to tackle complex challenges in their respective fields.

3. **Fostering Innovation and Creativity:**
   - The opportunity to work on their own startup ventures encourages students to think innovatively, explore new ideas, and experiment with creative solutions to address market needs and societal challenges.
   - By fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation, this initiative contributes to the growth of an entrepreneurial ecosystem within the institute, nurturing a cadre of future innovators and disruptors.

Groundwork:

1. I conducted extensive surveys with students to gather feedback on their internship experiences and explore their interest in pursuing entrepreneurial activities during the industrial training period. The major issue revealed by the students was the lack of a suitable time during their academic life to pursue and work on their startup venture full-time.
2. I had a discussion with professors from Rajendra Mishra School of Engineering Entrepreneurship regarding the proposal and the willingness of professors to track student's progress, and they were affirmative of the idea of the proposal. However, they suggested that implementation of this proposal would require discussions with multiple stakeholders in the institute involved in the whole process of compulsory internships.
3. I discussed with members of the Placement Committee regarding the proposal idea and its feasibility, and they were affirmative of the idea of students pursuing entrepreneurial ventures during the compulsory internship period.
4. I contacted the founders of a few prominent startups that originated from IIT Kharagpur during their academic life, and they were very positive about the impact of this proposal on the entrepreneurial culture of IIT Kharagpur.