

Your Guide to Innovation on Campus

by PML Hacks

If you are on campus, you have an obligation to support the creation of new knowledge and solutions to the problems we face. But how do we innovate? Or what can we do in our capacity to help others innovate? PML HACKS at the Precision Medicine Lab (2nd Floor, Laboratory Building, RMI) presents to you a guide, with all you need to begin with.

Deans/Principal/ Vice Principals	You are the enablers. Make sure you don't inadvertently become a barrier instead. Encourage students and faculty members to toy with new ideas and have a bias for 'solving' and 'building' solutions, not just 'talking' and 'publishing'. Signal the importance of activities around innovation by taking part in them yourself, as much as you can. Express your excitement and appreciation of great ideas, products, teams and individuals. Share links to key news or articles that you like around innovation with your mailing list or other groups. Young people look up to you and your words matter. Grant permissions where needed in a timely manner where asked for. The best way to kill innovation is to delay it. Stress on the fact that they don't need your permission to express ideas or toy with them. Also think of physical spaces in your College. Happy, bright, 'free' spaces are known to catalyze new ideas. Create more communal spaces like meeting rooms, even cafe's for people to mingle more and have conversations.
HODs	All of the above, and the following: Make sure you encourage a sense of competition between your students and those of the other Colleges. Health rivalries help. Encourage both students and faculty to take part in activities around innovation. Create space in the curriculum, your programmes and even individual courses for folks to reflect, do case studies, build projects and prototypes, invite guest lectures, etc. Encourage out-of-the-box electives. Each added interaction of new people has a compounding effect over time.
Programme and Departmental Coordinators	Help give space to students when designing schedules and time tables. Empty slots, outside a class, are a rich source of ideas for students. You should never pack the daily schedule from morning to afternoons. Sprinkle guest lectures each month that are open to all batches/years. Encourage journal clubs, book clubs and other projects outside their courses. Help students lead departmental activities and societies. Motivate people. Always be positive. Young people can achieve anything, till they are told they can't.
Faculty members	Lead by example. Think out of the box. Sprinkle exciting nuggets in your lectures. Seed ideas. Yes, seed them and encourage students to run with them. You don't have the time to do it anyway. If they win, you will win, too, intellectually and who knows financially even. If they don't, then atleast you know the idea was not worth your time. You can not only inspire and motivate students, but you could also lead by example. Get your hands dirty and spend some time with them.

Student Leaders e.g. Leaders of Student Societies	Stitch up a new society? Organise competitions with the help of folks such as the Precision Medicine Lab, or incubators. Invite accomplished guest speakers on a regular basis to your campus (people love to share their experiences!). This will begin to <i>brew</i> growing <i>soup</i> of ideas in your College.
Students	How can you be an innovator? Set your prioritize (don't lose focus on your main objective: your degree) but push yourself beyond that and stand out. Organise yourself. Manage your time. Give yourself some free time outside your courses and exams. Force yourself to do so. Read more books. Keep tabs on high quality blogs and podcasts (and clubhouse rooms). Keep a diary of your key ideas and problems that you note. 'Unlike' poor quality pages and 'leave' useless groups (opens up news feed space for the good stuff!). Stop talking about ideas and start doing them. Learn your way as you go. Be friends with folks at the Precision Medicine Lab. Find yourself mentor(s) who can guide you. Get outside your comfort zone. Embrace uncertainty. Try new things and fail. You won't learn anything if you win the first time.

V1.2; March 2021

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