Title of the Practice: Coordinated development

Objective:
At the Institute, the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs has been entrusted with the objective of coordinating all fund-raising activities, and of coordinating and maintaining contact with industry and various agencies for this purpose.

Context:
In early 1990's due to the financial crisis the country faced, the Government of India encouraged the Institutes of higher learning to raise funds from alternate sources such as industry, alumni, and philanthropists.

Subsequently, the National Higher Education Mission (RashtriyaUchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan) document, September 2013, mentions, raising philanthropic funds, donations/grants from private companies/trusts/NRIs, CSR funds as an element of strategy to raise additional resources to supplement Government funding to Institutes of higher learning. The document further mentions (a) creating enabling conditions to make higher education system robust and useful to attract investments – autonomy (in financial, regulatory, academic and administrative aspects), ensure accountability and governance; (b) Fiscal incentives to attract funding; (c) Creation of new infrastructure through corporate investments – (1) setting up of new facilities in existing Institutions such as centres of excellence or technology parks (2) creating new knowledge clusters/hubs; (d) creating new institutes through public, private and PPP.

In the current context, several of the institutes of higher learning have been declared as Institutes of National Eminence and have been provided by the Government of India with tax breaks for philanthropic funding. Many of these institutes are also exempted from the FCRA act which enables them to receive foreign philanthropic funds.

Practice:
Keeping the objectives in mind, the council of Indian Institute of Science established the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs (ODAA) in 2015. This office focussed on two aspects (1) establishing a network with Industry, philanthropists and alumni (who serve as ambassadors of the Institute) and (2) identifying the Institute's additional funding requirements.

The key elements in establishing the network were (a) creating a dedicated portal for alumni, who can connect with their alma mater and be fully aware of all the developments (b) creation of a webpage on Institute portal listing the opportunities for funding by the philanthropists, alumni and corporates, and highlighting the contributions of current donors to the Institute and the impact it made.

The recent advances in digital media were utilized to connect with individuals and corporates using LinkedIn and mailing system.

ODAA evaluated all sources of philanthropic funding. The new opportunities available due to the amendment to the Companies Act and the mandatory requirement to do corporate social responsibility (CSR) subject to certain conditions were considered. Annual reports of hundreds of companies were reviewed to know their CSR policies and that match with the Institutes focus areas.

ODAA did an analysis of its alumni and identified a strategy to keep the unique nature of IISc alumni, who are small in number but have made outstanding contributions to the country in higher education, space, atomic energy, and defence research. This unique feature was used to identify key

alumni and well-wishers to guide ODAA in connecting with corporates and philanthropists. The key element of the strategy was to rely on alumni's time and influence rather than their ability to provide personal funds.

ODAA prepares the detailed project proposals with the help of IISc faculty and administration and submits these to key corporates for their internal evaluation. The proposals are followed up till the completion of the process and, if the project is sanctioned, until MOU or a grant letter is signed. Once the fund flow starts, the project is executed by the concerned department/centre/faculty in the Institute. ODAA submits the periodic progress reports and the utilizations certificates after obtaining them from the execution team and the finance department.

The council of IISc had permitted ODAA to keep 5% of the funds raised for its sustainability and project management.

Evidence of Success:
Since establishment of ODAA, has raised significant funds at "zero" additional cost to the Institute. Since inception, no funds have been taken from the Institute for fund-raising activities and hence ODAA is a self-sustaining office. This makes it a unique model of fund-raising in the academic world. Furthermore, the office has expanded from 2 to 9 members entirely with internal funds.

New infrastructure, womens' hostels and centres have been established with contributions from corporates and philanthropists. To name a few, new women's hostel (funded by Jindal Aluminium and BPCL), HAL-IISc Skill Development Centre, TCS Smart X hub, testing, analysis, and research and HDFC sustainable technologies skill training centre.

Problems Encountered and Resources required:
They key challenges faced were (a) lack of data, both of alumni and industry contact persons (b) limitations due to which quick adaptations to the industry best practices took time (c) challenges in execution of the sanctioned projects and ability to meet the timelines and (d) meeting financial reporting timelines.

Title of the Practice: Alumni Affairs

Objective:
An Office of Development and Alumni Affairs (ODAA) has been established at IISc with the goals (i) to build a vibrant community of alumni, who seek to help advance the Institute's mission, and (ii) to provide the services and tools required to connect and support the growing IISc alumni community worldwide, keeping them well informed of IISc news, developments, successes and future plans.

Context:
Since its founding in 1909, IISc has nurtured and produced the nation's leading scientists and technocrats, who have contributed to the welfare of the nation and the world. In the last century, IISc has produced more than 35,000 graduates in various science and engineering disciplines. These illustrious alums seek to remain connected and give back to the Institute that provided them with the rich ecosystem in which they were able to thrive. Thus, ODAA was established in 2015 to facilitate this mission. This allows IISc alums to easily connect both with each other and with the Institute, through a dynamic set of services and tools.

Practice:

ODAA is the single point of contact for the alumni of IISc. It is the bridge through which former students reach out to their alma mater, and vice versa. The Office keeps the alumni informed of what is happening at the Institute through regular mails and bulletins. It also maintains a dynamic and user-friendly alumni networking portal that allows alumni to connect with each other.

The Office is the starting point for alums with any requests pertaining to IISc. This includes facilitating accommodation and department tours for any alumni who might be visiting the Institute, organising reunions for individual batches who might wish to convene on campus, and other such requests. The Office has also been tasked with issuing digital ID cards to all registered alums. Proud IISc alumni also wish to display their connection with the Institute. The Office facilitates this by providing them with IISc memorabilia and unique gifts, including historic books, diaries, and even car stickers.

The Office also hosts the much-anticipated annual IISc Alumni Reunion, in which hundreds of alumni from around the world gather each year on campus. Work on organising the reunion starts months in advance, with the preparation of promotional materials and the collection of registrations. During the two-day event, alumni are made to feel at home and kept engaged throughout the weekend, with special talks, department visits, cultural and sporting events. The event also features the bestowing of the prestigious Distinguished Alumnus awards, through which IISc recognises its most illustrious alums.

Importantly, the Office also acts as a fundraising arm. Alumni are encouraged and supported to give back to their alma mater through various creative means, including fellowships, gold medals, and endowments, or by supporting projects and research.

Evidence of success:
Overall, the Alumni Affairs division of ODAA has seen substantial success since its founding in 2015. The division looks forward to sustained growth, as it continues to serve its role in supporting the Institute in its overall mission. It was only after the setting up of ODAA that the Institute began hosting the Annual Alumni Reunion. The event has steadily grown in participation: The 2018 event saw 333 registrations.

ODAA has been able to source alumni contributions to facilitate a number of successful initiatives including: Endowed chair professorships, sponsorship of young investigator research positions, student travel funds for international conferences, Institute gold medals, Masters and PhD fellowships, research awards, tuition fee reimbursements, classroom renovations, research funding for students and faculty, and the creation of an advanced networking portal to connect IISc's alums worldwide. In the last year alone, ODAA was able to source funding from alumni for more than fifty different projects. Since 2015, a total of at least 42 crores has been raised directly from the alums.

Problems encountered and resources required:
While ODAA has been successful so far in fulfilling its mission as stated above, it faces challenges common to any enterprise growing at a similar pace. These include challenges in the areas of efficiency, task automation, project management, and raising the required funds needed to keep pace with the funding requests received from students and faculty.