

IITs Run Special Helpdesk for Female Rank-holders in JEE (Advanced) 2017

In 2016, of the female candidates who qualified in JEE(Advanced) and whose rank was high enough to get a seat in the IITs, only 38% actually accepted an IIT seat. This was because female students had opted for limited choices during counselling. Their parents, worried for their safety, were reluctant to allow them to opt for IITs far from home. As a result, the gender ratio in the admitted batch across the IITs was a woeful 8%. Recently, the IITs decided on a slew of measures to raise the gender ratio to 20% by 2020.

One measure is a special helpdesk web-portal to advise JEE(Adv) 2017 qualified women on their range of attractive options in various IITs. This initiative is run by over 100 women faculty, students and alumni. Female aspirants, and their parents, can find out firsthand what life and academics are like for a bright young woman in a BTech or other 4-5 year UG programme at an IIT. They can talk to the volunteers through phone, email and special Facebook pages. The helpdesk was launched on 12th June via an email sent by Prof. T.A. Gonsalves, Director, IIT Mandi to each of the successful female candidates. Female Aspirant 2017 portal: https://students.iitmandi.ac.in/other_IITs.php

All IITs offer an unsurpassed UG educational experience. This includes a flexible curriculum that enables a student to find and follow her passion; state-of-the-art lab facilities; world-renowned faculty who through their research are always upto-date; a wide range of extra-curricular activities including sports, cultural and literary events. The flexible curriculum in which students can take a number of elective courses means that a student who does not get her favourite branch, could pursue her interest through electives and projects.

In this context, IIT Mandi is an ideal space for women engineers in the making. Located in the serene, clean and unpolluted state of Himachal Pradesh, away from the hassles and dangers of cities, IIT Mandi is a completely safe environment for young women. With a fully residential campus hosting 900 students and over 100 faculty, IIT Mandi offers an environment that is as secure as it is intellectually stimulating. We have a unique project-based curriculum, motivating students to work on real-life engineering problems from their 1st year onwards. The excellent student to faculty ratio of 9:1 makes faculty-student interactions easier.

While in big institutions with 1,000s of students there is a high level of competition to participate in extracurricular activities, at IIT Mandi owing to the smaller number of students all interested students get to participate in extra-curricular activities of their choice even from their 1st year. IIT Mandi's women students have, in the past few years, excelled by getting placed in world-renowned companies, by receiving scholarships to study in leading universities in India and abroad, and by winning awards in technical, cultural and sports competitions. The emphasis at IIT Mandi is to enable students in its charge to become competent engineers and good citizens.

On 17th June 2017 (Saturday), IIT Delhi is hosting an Open House exclusively for female candidates who have qualified JEE (Advanced) 2017. This will be conducted by female faculty, students, and alumni. It will be a wonderful opportunity for female candidates to satisfy their curiosity about life and education at an IIT. IIT Mandi will also be present at this

Open House event. Dr. Pradeep Parameswaran, Associate Dean (Courses), Ms. Lishma Anand, Head Guidance Counsellor and several student volunteers will be there to talk about IIT Mandi.

Profound social changes have always been sparked by small steps. We in the IITs hope that this step of the IITs will change the face of Indian society in the years to come.

For more information visit

- Online helpdesk portal with links to many IITs: https://students.iitmandi.ac.in/other_IITs.php
- IIT-D Open House on Sat 17th June: http://bsw.iitd.ac.in/female_interaction.php
- IIT Mandi Facebook for Female Aspirants
2017: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/231995973956201>
- IIT Mandi website: <http://www.iitmandi.ac.in/>

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