

Calling all brands to participate in the 2023 IIE-Vega Brand Challenge

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[Vega School](#), an educational brand of The Independent Institute of Education (The IIE) is once again calling on brands and industry partners that would like to co-create and participate in the annual IIE-Vega Brand Challenge commencing in October 2023.

The IIE-Vega Brand Challenge is an opportunity for final-year students to collaborate in national multidisciplinary teams to develop solutions to 'real world' brand challenges briefed by industry partners.

"IIE-Vega Brand Challenge prepare students for the working world by offering them the opportunity to experience the demands of real-world briefs as collaborative teams in a virtual workspace," says Amalia van Schalkwyk, national IIE-Vega Brand Challenge project manager.

"The IIE-Vega Brand Challenge process takes four weeks during which, student teams are first assigned an industry brief, industry partners then brief student teams online in a 60-minute interactive session where they have the opportunity to investigate the brand and brief. Thereafter student teams conduct a 360-degree brand analysis (which entails in-depth secondary and primary research) to determine the key issues facing the brand; uncover stakeholder insights; develop a contact strategy for the brand; and execute strategic creative solutions for presentation to the client."



This programme equips students with real-time and real-world exposure to develop their minds and skillsets to conduct research, identify meaningful strategic direction, devise innovative and purposeful brand-building plans, and produce creative executions during their studies.

These final-year student teams are guided through the four-week strategic and creative development process by a panel of academic navigators (lecturers) with relevant industry experience.



In addition, student teams are charged with creating innovative brand-building solutions for their industry partners in

exchange for a contribution to the IIE-Vega bursary and student support fund.

The bursary and student support fund contribution works on a recommended 3-tier scale:

- Tier 1: Large, listed company: R90k full bursary contribution
- Tier 2: Medium-sized organisations: R45k half bursary contribution
- Tier 3: Small organisations: R20k bursary contribution

Since the inception of IIE-Vega School, van Schalkwyk makes note of some of the highlights of the IIE-Vega Brand Challenge, "Collaborating with incredible industry partners, great feedback from industry partners, the countless "aha" or "lightbulb" moments in student presentations, and the opportunity to support future Veganites with our bursary and student support fund".



During 2022's IIE-Vega Brand Challenge, 87 teams consisting of strategic brand planners, digital marketers, graphic designers, digital designers, and copywriters undertook this project and partnered with 25 industry partners from various industries and received high praise.

"Brand Challenge was a great experience for the Planet Fitness team. We learned so much from the students as well as gained a lot of insight about how the public sees the brand. What also stood out was the fact that each team viewed the brand through different lenses, it was interesting to see what stood out to some while something completely different stood out to others." says Davorka Elez, marketing manager of Planet Fitness.

Paul Masilo, director of Freshmo Brands mentioned that "IIE-Vega Brand Challenge is a great initiative, I am grateful that I partnered with the school for my project. I am coming back for some more." Gerhard Vos, Director from the Wilger Group who heads up the Rhino Conservation Project said that "it was super awesome to work with Vega, the students made an incredible contribution to our brand, well done! Thank you for the guidance that the navigators provide to students, we are incredibly happy with the project outcomes."



The annual IIE-Vega Brand Challenge is IIE-Vega's commitment to ensuring that students are exposed to "real-life" industry briefs to prepare them for the world of work.

The IIE-Vega Brand Challenge runs from 5 October - 3 November 2023. Any industry partner that would like to co-create and participate in this exciting annual project by introducing a current challenge, taking on three student teams and contributing to the student grant fund, can contact our National IIE-Vega Brand Challenge Project Manager: Amalia van Schalkwyk at amvschalkwyk@vegaschool.com.

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