



2023
Career Fair
Guidebook

Contents

Introduction	2
What is a Career Fair?	3
Preparation	5
- Resume/Research/Dress Code/Elevator Pitch	
Career Fair + App	10
Virtual Fair	13
For International Students	14
First-Time Attendees	16
Before the Fair (To-Do Checklist)	18
Day of the Fair	19
After the Fair	20

Introduction

Welcome to the 2023 Industrial Roundtable Career Fair hosted by the Purdue Engineering Student Council, the nation's largest student-run career fair! We are thrilled to introduce you to this robust networking platform which has hosted over 400 companies and witnessed participation from thousands of students, both domestic and international. This guidebook provides an extensive understanding of the fair, strategies for maximizing your outcomes, and an emphasis on the fair's inclusivity and student-friendliness.

What is a Career Fair?

A Career Fair is a professional recruiting event during which various employers seek out prospective interns, co-ops, and full-time employees for their companies. As such, it is a fantastic opportunity for students to network and learn about different industries, and for recruiters to identify and hire promising students for a role in their company!

At in-person career fairs, each company has a booth where its representatives are present for the day. Students can approach the booth, present their resume, and discuss opportunities at the company with its representatives.

At virtual career fairs, students generally schedule 1-on-1 appointments with company representatives, similar to a Zoom call. Whereas anyone can walk up to a company at an in-person fair, students usually must meet certain criteria to schedule a meeting with a company at a virtual fair.

The Industrial Roundtable is more than just a career fair. It's an annual event that allows students across all disciplines to interact with industry leaders, discover various employment opportunities, and get valuable insights into the working world. Whether you're a freshman exploring potential career paths, a senior seeking full-time employment, or a graduate student interested in internships or research opportunities, the Industrial Roundtable is an essential event for you.



Industrial Roundtable is not only Purdue's largest the largest student-run Career Fair in the country! For 2023, IR will be hybrid, both in-person and online, to accommodate all Boilermakers!

2023 Hybrid Fair Information

In-Person: September 12th & 13th from 9 AM to 4PM EST

Online: September 14th from 10 AM to 4 PM EST

Preparation

Resume Preparation

The National Association of Colleges and Employers' Job Outlook 2021 survey states that the top attributes employers look for on a student's resume are problem-solving skills and the ability to work in a team.

- **Relevance:** Highlight relevant skills, experiences, and achievements. For example, if you're a mechanical engineering major, emphasize specific courses, projects, or experiences related to this field.
- **Quantify Achievements:** Use numbers and statistics wherever possible to make your achievements more tangible. For example, "Led a team of 5 to design a bridge model that withstood 20% more weight than the class average."
- **Proofreading:** A 2018 CareerBuilder survey found that 77% of hiring managers immediately disqualify resumes because of grammatical mistakes or typos. Therefore, meticulous proofreading is essential. Use tools like Grammarly and ask mentors, faculty, or the Center for Career Opportunities (CCO) for additional reviews.

- **CCO Resources:**
 - ***The CCO's Career Decision Making Model:***
<https://www.cco.purdue.edu/Students/CareerCompass?tab=SelfAssessment>
 - ***Brainstorming ideas/Templates:***
<https://www.cco.purdue.edu/Students/ResumesAndCVs>
 - ***For Resume Review, schedule an appointment with CCO at Vmock:***
 - ***CCO Resume Handbook:***
<https://www.cco.purdue.edu/Files/Uploaded/Handbook.pdf>
 - ***For Resume Review and tips, schedule an appointment with CCO beforehand or use Vmock:***
<https://www.vmock.com/purdue>

Company Research and Selection

Before walking into a career fair, you should get to know which companies, especially within your industry, will be attending. An extensive list of participating companies will be available ahead of the career fair. Go beyond the company's website. Use platforms like LinkedIn, Glassdoor, and Indeed to gather more nuanced information about the company culture, recent achievements, and employee experiences. Talk to recruiters about what you've read and what you know, and if you can, go ahead and apply for the position early! These go a long way to show that you've spent extra time getting to know the company beforehand and really want to work for them!

Understand the roles and responsibilities associated with the positions you're interested in. You can use this information to tailor your "elevator pitch," making you more appealing to recruiters.

Dress Code

According to a study by Hult Business School, 65% of hiring managers say clothes can be the deciding factor between two similar candidates.

First impressions are always important! Career fairs are professional events, so western business attire is highly preferred! However, the CCO office has alternatives if you do not currently own any professional clothes. If you're struggling with choosing an outfit, check out this article from CareerFair+ and the CCO Closet Blog:

- *CareerFair+ Article:*
<https://www.careerfairplus.com/blog/what-to-wear-to-a-career-fair>
- *CCO Closet Blog:*
<https://purduecco.wordpress.com/cco-career-closet/>

Elevator Pitch

In the context of a career fair, an elevator pitch is a concise, carefully planned, and well-practiced description of who you are, what you've accomplished, and where you want to go in terms of your career. It's your chance to make a great first impression and spark interest in less than a minute. Here are some steps to help you prepare:

1. Start with the Basics: Who are you?

Begin by introducing yourself. Include your name, what you're studying, and your current academic status (first-year student, sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate student).

2. Highlight Key Achievements and Skills:

Mention your academic achievements, relevant coursework, key projects, research, or internship experiences. Discuss the skills you've gained from these experiences that would be valuable to the potential employer. Be specific and choose the most impactful and relevant achievements.

3. Explain Your Career Goals:

What type of job or internship are you seeking? What industry or role interests you? If you're talking to a specific company, tailor your goal to align with the roles they're hiring for.

4. Show Enthusiasm and Initiative:

Express your enthusiasm for the company and role. Show initiative by mentioning how you've pursued relevant knowledge or experiences.

5. Practice, Practice, Practice:

Rehearse your pitch until you can deliver it naturally and confidently. Use a mirror or record yourself to review your delivery, body language, and timing. You can also practice with friends, family, or book an appointment with the CCO.

Download CF+ App

The Career Fair Plus App will be your go-to guide during the fair, whether virtual or in-person! The app contains the full list of companies attending the fair and will have a map with where each company's booth is on the day of the fair See more information on CF+ on the next page.

Career Fair Plus



Before the fair, create an account on Career Fair Plus! You must register on CF+ to meet with companies for virtual interviews but not in-person ones.

For your PC:

1. Go to

app.careerfairplus.com/profile/create

2. Create a New Account*

Use your **Purdue email address* to create a new account. The password can be whatever you like.

3. Find your Organization/School and Fair

Find and select 'Purdue University'

For your Mobile Device:

1. Download the App:

Search 'Career Fair Plus' in the App Store or Play Store

PURDUE
UNIVERSITY

Purdue University
15 Upcoming Fairs

4. Find your Event

For IR, find and select 'Industrial Roundtable' (There are separate events listed for virtual and in-person)

In-Person Industrial Roundtable 2022
Purdue Engineering Student Council
Tue, Sep 13th - Wed, Sep 14th 2022 (8:00 am - 4:00 pm EDT)
Oval Dr, West Lafayette, IN 47907, USA

Virtual Industrial Roundtable 2022
Purdue Engineering Student Council
Thu, Sep 15th 2022 (10:00 am - 4:00 pm EDT)
Purdue University, Purdue Mall, West Lafayette, IN, USA

5. Optimize Your Experience

Filter attending companies by major, class, GPA, etc. to see who's interested recruiting you!

6. Register for Meetings with Companies

For Industrial Roundtable 2023:

September 1st @ 7:00 AM EDT: Students will be able to begin scheduling appointments.

- Some companies may say "No Schedules", this means the company will be taking walk ups only.
- The In-Person fair is by walks ups and appointments while the virtual fair is only by appointment.
- You will initially be limited to 4 appointments in-person and 4 appointments virtual.

Friday, September 8th @ 7:00 AM EDT: The appointment restrictions will be lifted. Then, students will be able to schedule any number of additional available appointments.

Online Career Fair

On the 14th, you can connect with select companies via the CareerFair+ application. Although it is highly encouraged to attend the fair in person, here are some tips for those who choose to attend the virtual fair:

- **Tech Check:** Test your equipment beforehand. Check your internet connection, camera, and microphone.
- **Background:** Choose a professional and distraction-free background. A clean, neutral background is best.
- **Body Language:** Maintain good posture, show enthusiasm, and remember to look at the camera when speaking.
- **Attire:** Dress professionally, at least from the waist up.

For International Students

We understand that as an international student, you may have unique concerns and questions about the career fair. Let's reassure you - the Industrial Roundtable welcomes and values the diverse perspectives that international students bring. Many employers recognize the global skills you offer - cross-cultural communication, adaptability, and often multilingual abilities. Here are some specific strategies to help you make the most of the career fair:

Resume and Work Authorization: Explicitly mention your work authorization status on your resume. This can be included in the contact information section. It could be as simple as "Eligible to work in the U.S. for internships/full-time jobs under CPT/OPT."

Employer Research: Research the companies attending the career fair to see which ones hire international students. Websites like Myvisajobs.com provide information on employers that have previously sponsored visas.

Highlight International Experience: Don't be shy about discussing the strengths you bring as an international student - cultural flexibility, bilingual or multilingual skills, international perspectives, and resilience. These are all valuable in today's global marketplace.

Resources: Purdue University provides many resources to help international students succeed:

- **Purdue's Center for Career Opportunities (CCO):** The CCO offers many resources, including resume reviews, mock interviews, and job search strategy consultations. They can help you navigate the U.S. job market.
- **International Students and Scholars (ISS):** ISS provides workshops on CPT, OPT, and visa regulations.
- **Writing Lab:** The writing lab can help you with resume and cover letter writing, ensuring that your applications meet U.S. standards and expectations.
- **Purdue Language and Cultural Exchange (PLaCE):** PLaCE offers language support to students for whom English is not their first language.

Finally, remember that the career fair is about exploration and learning. It's an opportunity to practice professional communication, gather information about companies and industries, and build your network. Every conversation you have is a step forward in your career journey. We're rooting for you!

First-Time Attendees

As a first-time attendee, it's natural to feel a mixture of excitement and nervousness. Attending the Purdue Engineering Student Council Career Fair is a pivotal step in your professional development, and it can indeed provide you with a significant advantage. Below, we've provided tips to help you navigate this important event and why you should attend!

Discover Opportunities: This is your chance to find out about internships, co-ops, and full-time positions available in the companies you're interested in. You might discover new companies and roles that weren't on your radar.

Networking: Meet professionals and recruiters who can provide you with valuable insights about their companies, industries, and job roles. Networking can often lead to job opportunities.

Learn about the Industry: Understand current trends, skills in demand, and future growth areas. You get to hear firsthand from industry professionals about what it's like to work in their field.

Develop Confidence: Interacting with recruiters helps you build confidence in professional settings. Each conversation you have is practice for future job interviews.

Tips for First-Time Attendees

Set Realistic Expectations: As a first-time attendee, your goal isn't necessarily to secure a job or internship (though that would be great!). Instead, focus on learning about different companies, understanding the job market, and practicing professional interaction.

Research: Understand the layout of the career fair, the participating companies, and the roles they are hiring for. This will help you feel more prepared and less overwhelmed.

Practice Your Elevator Pitch: Practice makes perfect! Rehearse your elevator pitch with friends, family, or at the Center for Career Opportunities (CCO) at Purdue. This will help you present yourself confidently.

Dress for Success: Dressing professionally will not only make a good impression on recruiters, but it will also boost your confidence.

Self-Care: Make sure you eat, stay hydrated, and rest well before the fair. Taking care of your physical well-being will help you stay focused and energetic. Keep in mind that the in-person career fair will be on a hot day so make sure to drink lots of water and stay cool.

Attend Workshops: Attend any pre-career fair workshops or events held on campus. These can give you additional insights and make you feel more comfortable about attending the fair.

Be Open-Minded: You may discover companies and opportunities you hadn't considered before. Be open to these new possibilities.

Remember, every attendee at the career fair was once in your shoes. It's okay to feel nervous. Just remember that with preparation and an open mind, you can make the most out of your first career fair experience.

Before the Fair

Preparing for a Successful Day: To Do List

€ Elevator Pitch (Know Yourself)

€ Resume

€ Print 10-20 copies for in-person, upload to CF+ for virtual

€ Register on Career Fair Plus

€ Add in Resume and Major

€ Schedule Appointments

€ Download CF+ App on mobile device

€ Research Companies of Interest

€ Use CF+ to determine where the companies' booths will be located on fair day.

€ Business Casual Clothing

€ Attend Virtual IR Prep Night

€ Attend Seminars

€ Print off Name Tag for in-person IR

Day of the Fair

Get the Most out of Your Experience

Get There on Time

With pre-registered time slots, you do not need to show up overly early. Instead, double check your appointment times and make sure to be punctual!

Continue Using the CareerFair+ App

Use the map on Career Fair Plus to determine where companies are located. Check for notifications and updates that get sent out throughout the day of the fair!

Get Contact Information

Maintaining a contact with someone at your desired company is a gateway into learning more about or getting a future opportunity there. When talking to a recruiter, try to get their business card and remember a few key facts about them. Ask them relevant questions and try to understand why they choose to recruit and what they look for in prospective employees. Remember to collect business cards from recruiters. Send a personalized thank you email within 24-48 hours after the fair. Mention specific topics from your conversation to make your message memorable.

After the Fair

Follow Up and Stay in Touch

Every year, recruiters meet hundreds of eager students, and it can be difficult to remember each one. So, try to get the recruiter's contact information and let him or her know how appreciative you were to have the time to meet with them. Show that you are still interested in the role and the company and try to stay in touch with them even after the fair. Remember, recruiters are more likely to hire people they recognize or are comfortable with!

Interviews

The interview is one of the most crucial aspects of the application process; this is your chance to show recruiters your personality and ability. However, it shouldn't be just a question-and-answer session; think of the interview as a conversation between you and the recruiter. Interviewers typically use a technique called the "STAR Method" to gather all the relevant information about a specific capability that the job requires. Oftentimes, you may be asked to describe a scenario that highlights your problem-solving abilities. So, try to think ahead and prepare a few example scenarios to adapt and explain to interviewers. To practice and see examples of good interview responses and etiquette, check out the links below:

General Preparation:

<https://hbr.org/2022/11/tips-for-acing-your-first-job-interview>

STAR Method:

https://www.vawizard.org/wizpdf/STAR_Method_Interviews.pdf

Writing a Follow Up Email: <https://enhancv.com/blog/how-to-send-a-career-fair-follow-up-email/>

Conclusion

The Purdue Engineering Student Council Career Fair is a golden opportunity to propel your career to the next level. We hope that this guidebook provides you with the confidence and knowledge to make the most of it. Best of luck, Boilermakers!