



SCDT Discussions and Talks

These discussions and talks are efforts to share experience on applied research expertise with IIT Kanpur academic community.



Shri Sanjay Tandon

Professor of Practice, DRDO-Industry-Academia Centre of Excellence (DIA CoE) at IIT Kanpur

On

“Leadership Lessons from Complex Interdisciplinary Mission Success”

Date: 6th July 2026

Time: 5:10 PM to 6:10 PM

Venue: Samtel Centre Seminar Room (SCDT-105)

Visit: https://www.iitk.ac.in/scdt/discussion_and_talks.html to access the zoom link to join the discussion.

The event will be chaired by

Dr. Kantesh Balani
IIT Kanpur

Abstract of the discussion and talk

In today's rapidly evolving technological landscape, innovation is no longer confined to a single discipline, institution, or sector. Significant breakthroughs emerge when different disciplines and institutions join hands and create ideas. Developing complex technological systems demands not only scientific excellence, but also effective leadership capable of integrating diverse disciplines, navigating technological uncertainties, building trust across institutions towards a common mission, and sustaining innovation over long development cycles.

As India moves towards becoming a technology-driven and self-reliant nation, leadership capable of integrating science, engineering, academia, industry, and user will become increasingly important. Achieving technological leadership will depend on scientific capability as well as our ability to collaborate and convert ideas into coherent mission-oriented programs.

This talk will highlight some key dimensions of leadership required in interdisciplinary R&D and illustrates them through examples drawn from missile development programs. But these are equally relevant to other complex technology domains such as space, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, energy, and digital technologies.

Information about the speaker

Shri Sanjay Tandon is an alumnus of IIT Kanpur and served the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) for over 35 years in diverse scientific, techno-managerial, and leadership assignments. During his final assignment at DRDO, he was **Director, Institute of Technology Management, Mussoorie**, where he was responsible for training DRDO scientists in technology management, project management, material management, and organizational behaviour.

Following his retirement from active service, he was selected to establish **DRDO-Industry-Academia Centre of Excellence at IIT Kanpur (DIA CoE IITK)** as its Founding Director. Under his leadership, twenty research projects with a cumulative outlay of approximately ₹100 crore were sanctioned through the centre in three years.

In recognition of his contributions and services at DRDO, IIT Kanpur has designated him as **Professor of Practice** since Aug 2026. Earlier, in 2017, he was conferred the **Honorary Professorship** by the Amity Institute of Telecom Engineering & Management. He is also recipient of **DRDO's Best Techno-Managerial Services Awards (2013)**.