

SENIOR INNOVATION MANAGER

IDEAL START DATE: ASAP

ERLANGER KY 41018 | KFONB.COM | 859.647.0777

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Senior Innovation Manager is responsible for leading all aspects of new product development—from SKU strategy and formula development to trend reporting and ingredient innovation—across personal care categories for KFONB's three distinctive brands: Kirk's Soap, The Grandpa Soap Company, and SoF Body Care, as well as private label opportunities in both existing and emerging categories. Success in this role depends on close collaboration with both internal teams and external partners.

We're seeking someone with a genuine passion for the beauty & body care industry—particularly clean body care, home care and fragrance—who brings a constant curiosity and a drive to keep learning. This person thrives in a team environment, radiates positivity, and communicates effectively across all levels, especially when working cross-functionally or engaging with senior leadership.

They are proactive and solutions-oriented, always prepared with a back-up plan for the inevitable bumps in the development process. They don't shy away from asking one more question to uncover potential roadblocks early. Most importantly, they're not deterred by the phrase "it can't be done"—they're determined to understand why and explore what it would take to make it possible.

RESPONSIBILITIES/JOB DUTIES

- Support the development and execution of the strategic innovation roadmap for our brands aligning every innovation with the soul of our brands, market dynamics, and the voice of our customer.
- Monitors category trends and competitive landscape as well as analyzes data in relationship to existing products as well as to identify white space opportunities and translate them into meaningful new concepts that support brand positioning; Continuously seeks out new ingredients for innovation opportunities across all 3 brands
- Manages all aspects of product development from concept to execution
- Acts as the go-to expert on formulas, ingredients, benefits, and usage; able to address questions from Marketing, Customer Service, Sales as well as Retail and Distribution partners
- Sets timelines and critical milestones, providing regular project updates and proactively communicating foreseen challenges and schedule risks to the team while identifying and working through solutions
- Troubleshoots challenges in formulation, stability and compatibility, ensuring timely resolutions without compromising product quality
- Interfaces with Marketing team on product positioning and claims objectives, including alignment on target performance and ingredient claims to inform development / formulation requirements on Briefs
- Responsible for hard and soft product claims on packaging copy / website / social media, collaborating with Regulatory consultant and Marketing Lead with clinical substantiation process (hard claims) and advising on consumer perception substantiation process (soft claims)
- Partners with Regulatory Consultant to define and execute all necessary regulatory testing and manage testing processes towards timely completion
- Develops annual innovation budget with Finance Team and monitors and tracks actual vs budgeted expenses monthly
- Works with the junior project manager to ensure timeline, and processes are maintained, for on-time project execution and GM target achievement;
- Tracks distribution of formula samples from lab partners to inhouse testers during product development, consolidating feedback for redirects and ultimate approvals; requests and tracks distribution of clinical testing, Marketing needs and sales presentation samples
- Interfaces with clinical testing facilities to validate product copy claims, including providing samples on as needed basis
- Collaborates with Supply Chain, external contract fillers and packaging manufacturers to improve costs and sustainability claims for ingredients and packaging
- Seeks out new vendors for product redundancy as well as to develop innovative new product forms
- Collaborates with Supply Chain to set lab and production standards for manufacturing and quality control; maintains new product approval standards and reviews first production standards of new products
- Attends relevant trade shows to identify trends, interesting innovation and potential new vendor partners

DETAILS

Directly Reports to: Director of Marketing

Job Type: Salary

Salary Range: \$100,000 - \$115,000

Work Location: Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky

Qualified candidates please send your resume to

Email: jobs@kirksnatural.com

Subject Line: Senior Innovation Manager Application

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- 60 free products annually
- Medical Insurance
- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Paid Holidays
- 401k with match opportunity
- More details in company handbook

QUALIFICATIONS

- 6+ years of experience in personal care product development, preferably with "natural" / "clean beauty" focus, preferably in an indie brand environment; technical understanding of formulas and love of fragrances
- Strong understanding of beauty trends, R & D, consumer behavior and an awareness of ever shifting regulatory landscape
- Ability to successfully manage multiple projects with different completion dates; highly adaptable, able to take on new challenges and switch gears as necessary; embraces change and is a creative problem solver.
- Strong analytic, organizational and communication skills
- While in-office presence in our Northern Kentucky headquarters is preferred, we are open to fully remote candidates who can commit to frequent / monthly on-site visits. To support efficient and cost-effective travel, candidates must have access to direct flight options to the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG)

ABOUT US

Our business is family owned and operated by two second generation sisters, Molly & Katherine Oliver. With a growing portfolio of over 80 natural personal care products ranging in distribution at Walmart, Kroger, Publix, Amazon and more - we are just getting started!

Come join us!