



## **Innovation and Startup Policy Of Luthfaa Polytechnic Institute**

### **1. Strategies and Governance**

- a.** Resource mobilisation plan should be worked out at the institute for supporting pre-incubation, incubation infrastructure and facilities. A sustainable financial strategy should be defined in order to reduce the organizational constraints to work on the entrepreneurial agenda.
  - i.** Investment in the entrepreneurial activities should be a part of the institutional financial strategy. Minimum 1% fund of the total annual budget of our institution should be allocated for funding and supporting innovation and startups related activities through creation of separate 'Innovation fund'.
  - ii.** In order to have technology incubators, our institute have decided to approach local private and corporate sectors to generate funds, under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as per Section 135 of the Company Act 2013.
  - iii.** Institute may also raise funding through sponsorships and donations. Institute must actively engage alumni network for promoting Innovation & Entrepreneurship (I&E).
- b.** Importance of innovation and entrepreneurial agenda should be known across the institute and should be promoted and highlighted at institutional programs such as conferences, convocations, workshops, etc.
- c.** Institute should develop and implement I & E strategy and policy for the entire institute in order to integrate the entrepreneurial activities across various centers, departments, faculties, within the institutes, thus breaking the silos.

### **2. Startups Enabling Institutional Infrastructure**

Creation of pre-incubation and incubation facilities for nurturing innovations and startups in our institution should be undertaken. Incubation and Innovation need to be organically interlinked. Without innovation, new

enterprises are unlikely to succeed. The goal of the effort should be to link INNOVATION to ENTREPRISES to FINANCIAL SUCCESS.

Our institute has to create facilities within our institution for supporting pre-incubation (e.g. IICs as per the guidelines by MHRD's Innovation Cell, EDC, IEDC, New-Gen IEDC, Innovation Cell, Startup Cell, Student Clubs, etc.) and Incubation/ acceleration by mobilizing resources from internal and external sources.

### **3. Nurturing Innovations and Start ups**

**a.** Our institution is expected to establish processes and mechanisms for easy creation and nurturing of Start ups/enterprises by students, staff (including temporary or project staff), faculty, alumni and potential start up applicants even from outside the institution.

**b.** While defining their processes, institutions will ensure to achieve following:

**i.** Incubation support: Offer access to pre-incubation & Incubation facility to start ups by students, staff and faculty for mutually acceptable time-frame. Our institution may reach out to nearest incubation facilities (NIT Durgapur) in order to facilitate access to our students, staff and faculty.

**ii.** Our institute will allow licensing of IPR from institute to start up: Ideally students and faculty members intending to initiate a start up based on the technology developed or co-developed by them or the technology owned by the institute and allow to take a license on the said technology on easy term, either in terms of equity in the venture and/ or license fees and/ or royalty to obviate the early stage financial burden.

**iii.** Institute will allow setting up a start up (including social start ups) and working part-time for the start ups while studying / working: institute allows our students / staff to work on their innovative projects and setting up start ups (including Social Start ups) or work as intern / part-time in start ups (incubated in any recognized HEIs/Incubators) while studying / working. Student Entrepreneurs may earn credits for working on innovative prototypes/Business Models. Institute has to develop a clear guidelines to formalize this mechanism. Student inventors may also be allowed to opt for start up in place of their mini project/ major project, seminars, summer trainings. The area in which student wants to initiate a start up may be interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary. However, the student must describe how they will separate and clearly distinguish their ongoing research activities as a student from the work being conducted at the start up.

- c.** Students who are under incubation, but are pursuing some entrepreneurial ventures while studying should be allowed to use their address in the institute to register their company with due permission from the institution.
- d.** Students entrepreneurs should be allowed to sit for the examination, even if their attendance is less than the minimum permissible percentage, with due permission from the institute.
- e.** Our institute will allow our students to take a semester/year break (or even more depending upon the decision of review committee constituted by the institute) to work on their start ups and re-join academics to complete the course. Student entrepreneurs may earn academic credits for their efforts while creating an enterprise. Institute should set up a review committee for review of start up by students, and based on the progress made, it may consider giving appropriate credits for academics.
- f.** Institute has to allow faculty and staff to take off for a semester / year (or even more depending upon the decision of review committee constituted by the institute) as sabbatical/ unpaid leave/ casual leave/ earned leave for working on startups and come back. Institution should consider allowing use of its resource to faculty/students/staff wishing to establish start up as a fulltime effort. The seniority and other academic benefits during such period may be preserved for such staff or faculty.
- g.** Institute will facilitate the startup activities/ technology development by allowing students/ faculty/ staff to use institute infrastructure and facilities, as per the choice of the potential entrepreneur in the following manners:
  - h.** Short-term/ six-month/ one-year part-time entrepreneurship training.
    - ii. Mentorship support on regular basis.
    - iii. Facilitation in a variety of areas including technology development, ideation, creativity, design thinking, fund raising, financial management, cash-flow management, new venture planning, business development, product development, social entrepreneurship, productcosting, marketing, brand-development, human resource management as well as law and regulations impacting a business.
      - iv. Institute may also link the startups to other seed-fund providers/ angel funds/ venture funds or itself may set up seed-fund once the incubation activities mature.
      - v. License institute IPR as discussed following-
        - i. In return of the services and facilities, institute may take 2% to 9.5% equity/ stake in the startup/ company, based on brand used, faculty

contribution, support provided and use of institute's IPR (a limit of 9.5% is suggested so that institute has no legal liability arising out of startup. The institute should normally take much lower equity share, unless its full-time faculty/ staff have substantial shares). Other factors for consideration should be space, infrastructure, mentorship support, seedfunds, support for accounts, legal, patents etc.

- For staff and faculty, institute can take no more than 20% of shares that staff / faculty takes while drawing full salary from the institution; however, this share will be within the 9.5% cap of company shares, listed above.
- No restriction on shares that faculty / staff can take, as long as they do not spend more than 20% of office time on the startup in advisory or consultative role and do not compromise with their existing academic and administrative work / duties. In case the faculty/ staff holds the executive or managerial position for more than three months in a startup, then they will go on sabbatical/ leave without pay/ earned leave.
- In case of compulsory equity model, Startup may be given a cooling period of 3 months to use incubation services on rental basis to take a final decision based on satisfaction of 15 MIC services offered by the institute/incubator. In that case, during the cooling period, institute cannot force startup to issue equity on the first day of granting incubation support.

j. Our Institute could extend this startup facility to alumni of this institute as well as outsiders.

k. Participation in start up related activities needs to be considered as a legitimate activity of faculty in addition to teaching, R&D projects, industrial consultancy and management duties and must be considered while evaluating the annual performance of the faculty. Every faculty may be encouraged to mentor at least one startup.

l. Product development and commercialization as well as participating and nurturing of startups would now be added to a bucket of faculty-duties and each faculty would choose a mix and match of these activities (in addition to minimum required teaching and guidance) and then respective faculty are evaluated accordingly for their performance and promotion.

m. Institutions might also need to update/change/revise performance evaluation policies for faculty and staff as stated above.

n. Our Institute should ensure that at no stage any liability accrue to it because of any activity of any startup.

#### **4. Product Ownership Rights for Technologies Developed at Institute**

a. When institute facilities / funds are used substantially or when IPR is developed as a part of curriculum/ academic activity, IPR is to be jointly owned by inventors and the institute.

i. Inventors and institute could together license the product / IPR to any commercial organisation, with inventors having the primary say. License fees could be either / or a mix of:

1. Upfront fees or one-time technology transfer fees
2. Royalty as a percentage of sale-price
3. Shares in the company licensing the product.

ii. An institute may not be allowed to hold the equity as per the current statute, so SPV may be requested to hold equity on their behalf.

iii. If one or more of the inventors wish to incubate a company and license the product to this company, the royalties would be no more than 4% of sale price, preferably 1 to 2%, unless it is pure software product. If it is shares in the company, shares will again be 1% to 4%. For a pure software product licensing, there may be a revenue sharing to be mutually decided between the institute and the incubated company.

b. On the other hand, if product/ IPR is developed by innovators not using any institute facilities, outside office hours (for staff and faculty) or not as a part of curriculum by student, then product/ IPR will be entirely owned by inventors in proportion to the contributions made by them. In this case, inventors can decide to license the technology to third parties or use the technology the way they deem fit.

c. If there is a dispute in ownership, a minimum five membered committee consisting of two faculty members (having developed sufficient IPR and translated to commercialisation), two of the institute's alumni/ industry experts (having experience in technology commercialisation) and one legal advisor with experience in IPR, will examine the issue after meeting the inventors and help them settle this, hopefully to everybody's satisfaction. Institute can use alumni/ faculty of other institutes as members, if they cannot find sufficiently experienced alumni / faculty of their own.

d. Institute IPR cell or incubation center will only be a coordinator and facilitator for providing services to faculty, staff and students. They will have no say on how the invention is carried out, how it is patented or how it is to be licensed. If institute is to pay for patent filing, they can have a committee which can examine whether the

IPR is worth patenting. The committee should consist of faculty who have experience and excelled in technology translation. If inventors are using their own funds or noninstitute funds, then they alone should have a say in patenting.

e. Institute's decision-making body with respect to incubation / IPR / technology-licensing will consist of faculty and experts who have excelled in technology translation. Other faculty in the department / institute will have no say, including heads of department, heads of institutes, deans or registrars.

## **5. Organizational Capacity, Human Resources and Incentives**

a. Institute may recruit staff that have a strong innovation and entrepreneurial/ industrial experience, behaviour and attitude. This will help in fostering the I&E culture.

i. Some of the relevant faculty members with prior exposure and interest may be deputed for training to promote I&E.

ii. To achieve better engagement of staff in entrepreneurial activities, institutional policy on career development of staff should be developed with constant upskilling.

b. Faculty and departments of the institutes have to work in coherence and cross-departmental linkages should be strengthened through shared faculty, cross-faculty teaching and research in order to gain maximum utilization of internal resources and knowledge.

d. Faculty and staff should be encouraged to do courses on innovation, entrepreneurship management and venture development.

e. In order to attract and retain right people, institute should develop academic and non-academic incentives and reward mechanisms for all staff and stakeholders that actively contribute and support entrepreneurship agenda and activities.

i. The reward system for the staff may include sabbaticals, office and lab space for entrepreneurial activities, reduced teaching loads, awards, trainings, etc.

ii. The recognition of the stakeholders may include offering use of facilities and services, strategy for shared risk, as guest teachers, fellowships, associate ships, etc.

iii. A performance matrix should be developed and used for evaluation of annual performance.

## **6. Creating Innovation Pipeline and Pathways for Entrepreneurs at Institute Level**

a. To ensure exposure of maximum students to innovation and pre incubation activities at their early stage and to support the pathway from ideation to innovation to market, mechanisms should be devised at institution level.

i. Spreading awareness among students, faculty and staff about the value of entrepreneurship and its role in career development or employability should be a part of the institutional entrepreneurial agenda.

ii. Students/ staff should be taught that innovation (technology, process or business innovation) is a mechanism to solve the problems of the society and consumers. Entrepreneurs should innovate with focus on the market niche.

iii. Students should be encouraged to develop entrepreneurial mindset through experiential learning by exposing them to training in cognitive skills (e.g. design thinking, critical thinking, etc.), by inviting first generation local entrepreneurs or experts to address young minds. Initiatives like idea and innovation competitions, hackathons, workshops, bootcamps, seminars, conferences, exhibitions, mentoring by academic and industry personnel, throwing real life challenges, awards and recognition should be routinely organized.

b. The institute should link its start ups and companies with wider entrepreneurial ecosystem and by providing support to students who show potential, in pre-startup phase. Connecting student entrepreneurs with real life entrepreneurs will help the students in understanding real challenges which may be faced by them while going through the innovation funnel and will increase the probability of success.

c. The institute should establish Institution's Innovation Councils (IICs) as per the guidelines of MHRD's Innovation Cell and allocate appropriate budget for its activities. IICs should guide institutions in conducting various activities related to innovation, startup and entrepreneurship development. Collective and concentrated efforts should be undertaken to identify, scout, acknowledge, support and reward proven student ideas and innovations and to further facilitate their entrepreneurial journey.

d. For strengthening the innovation funnel of the institute, access to financing must be opened for the potential entrepreneurs.

i. Networking events must be organized to create a platform for the budding entrepreneurs to meet investors and pitch their ideas.

ii. Provide business incubation facilities: premises at subsidized cost. Laboratories, research facilities, IT services, training, mentoring, etc. should be accessible to the new startups.

iii. A culture needs to be promoted to understand that money is not FREE and is risk capital. The entrepreneur must utilize these funds and return. While funding is

taking risk on the entrepreneur, it is an obligation of the entrepreneur to make every effort possible to prove that the funding agency did right in funding him/ her.

e. Institute must develop a ready reckoner of Innovation Tool Kit, which must be kept on the homepage on institute's website to answer the doubts and queries of the innovators and enlisting the facilities available at the institute.

## **7. Norms for Faculty Startups**

a. For better coordination of the entrepreneurial activities, norms for faculty to do startups should be created by the institutes. Only those technologies should be taken for faculty startups which originate from within the same institute.

Institutes should work on developing a policy on 'conflict of interests' to ensure that the regular duties of the faculty don't suffer owing to his/her involvement in the startup activities.

b. Faculty must clearly separate and distinguish on-going research at the institute from the work conducted at the startup/ company.

c. Human subject related research in startup should get clearance from ethics committee of the institution.

## **8. Pedagogy and Learning Interventions for Entrepreneurship Development**

a. Diversified approach should be adopted to produce desirable learning outcomes, which should include cross disciplinary learning using mentors, labs, case studies, games, etc. in place of traditional lecture-based delivery.

i. Student clubs/ bodies/ departments must be created for organizing competitions, bootcamps, workshops, awards, etc. These bodies should be involved in institutional strategy planning to ensure enhancement of the student's thinking and responding ability.

ii. Institute should start annual 'INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD' to recognize outstanding ideas, successful enterprises and contributors for promoting innovation and enterprises ecosystem within the institute.

iii. For creating awareness among the students, the teaching methods should include case studies on business failure and real-life experience reports by startups.

iv. Tolerating and encouraging failures: Our systems are not designed for tolerating and encouraging failure. Failures need to be elaborately discussed and debated to imbibe that failure is a part of life, thus helping in reducing the social stigma associated with it. Very importantly, this should be a part of institute's philosophy and culture.



v. **Innovation champions** should be nominated from within the students/ faculty/ staff for each department/ stream of study.

b. **Entrepreneurship education** should be imparted to students at curricular/ co-curricular/ extracurricular level through elective/ short term or long-term courses on innovation, entrepreneurship and venture development. Validated learning outcomes should be made available to the students.

i. Integration of expertise of the external stakeholders should be done in the entrepreneurship education to evolve a culture of collaboration and engagement with external environment.

ii. In the beginning of every academic session, institute should conduct an **induction program** about the importance of I&E so that freshly inducted students are made aware about the entrepreneurial agenda of the institute and available support systems. Curriculum for the entrepreneurship education should be continuously updated based on entrepreneurship research outcomes. This should also include case studies on failures.

iii. It must be noted that not everyone can become an entrepreneur. The entrepreneur is a leader, who would convert an innovation successfully into a product, others may join the leader and work for the startup. It is important to understand that entrepreneurship is about risk taking. One must carefully evaluate whether a student is capable and willing to take risk.

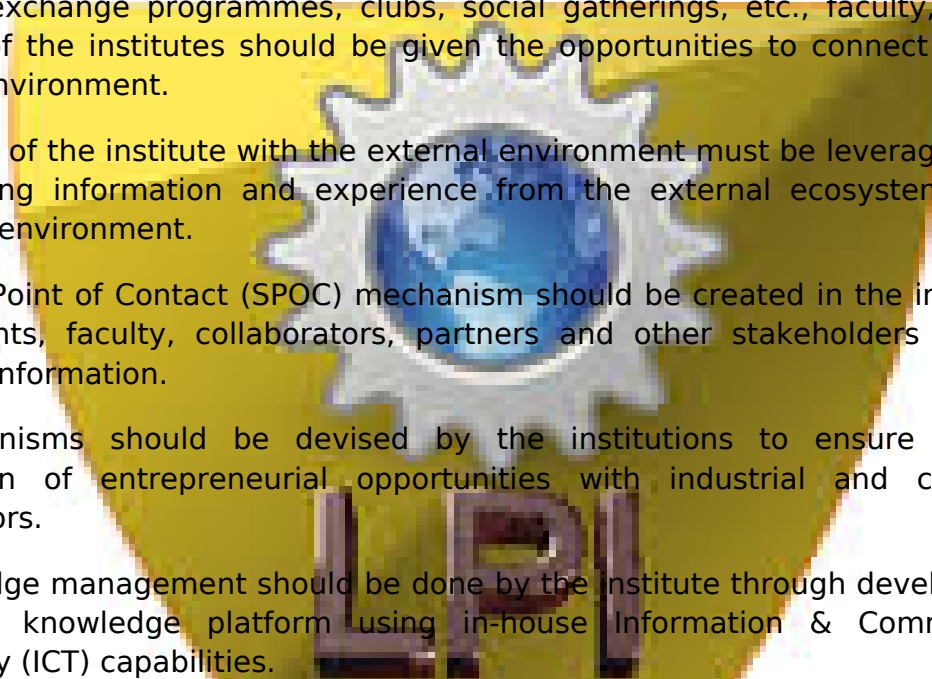
c. Pedagogical changes need to be done to ensure that maximum number of student projects and innovations are based around real life challenges. Learning interventions developed by the institutes for inculcating entrepreneurial culture should be constantly reviewed and updated.

## **9. Collaboration, Co-creation, Business Relationships and Knowledge Exchange**

a. Stakeholder engagement should be given prime importance in the entrepreneurial agenda of the institute. Institutes should find potential partners, resource organizations, micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs), social enterprises, schools, alumni, professional bodies and entrepreneurs to support entrepreneurship and co-design the programs.

b. The institute has to develop policy and guidelines for forming and managing the relationships with external stakeholders including private industries.

c. Knowledge exchange through collaboration and partnership should be made a part of institutional policy and institute must provide support mechanisms and guidance for creating, managing and coordinating these relationships.

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- i. Through formal and informal mechanisms such as internships, teaching and research exchange programmes, clubs, social gatherings, etc., faculty, staff and students of the institutes should be given the opportunities to connect with their external environment.
  - ii. Connect of the institute with the external environment must be leveraged in form of absorbing information and experience from the external ecosystem into the institute's environment.
  - iii. Single Point of Contact (SPOC) mechanism should be created in the institute for the students, faculty, collaborators, partners and other stakeholders to ensure access to information.
  - iv. Mechanisms should be devised by the institutions to ensure maximum exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities with industrial and commercial collaborators.
  - v. Knowledge management should be done by the institute through development of innovation knowledge platform using in-house Information & Communication Technology (ICT) capabilities.

## **10. Entrepreneurial Impact Assessment**

- a. Impact assessment of institute's entrepreneurial initiatives such as pre-incubation, incubation, entrepreneurship education should be performed regularly using well defined evaluation parameters.
  - i. Monitoring and evaluation of knowledge exchange initiatives, engagement of all departments and faculty in the entrepreneurial teaching and learning should be assessed.
  - ii. Number of startups created, support system provided at the institutional level and satisfaction of participants, new business relationships created by the institutes should be recorded and used for impact assessment.
  - iii. Impact should also be measured for the support system provided by the institute to the student entrepreneurs, faculty and staff for pre-incubation, incubation, IPR protection, industry linkages, exposure to entrepreneurial ecosystem, etc.
- b. Formulation of strategy and impact assessment should go hand in hand. The information on impact of the activities should be actively used while developing and reviewing the entrepreneurial strategy.
- c. Impact assessment for measuring the success should be in terms of sustainable social, financial and technological impact in the market. For innovations at pre-commercial stage, development of sustainable enterprise model is critical. COMMERCIAL success is the ONLY measure in long run.