ATRIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Innovation & Entrepreneurship Policy for Students & Faculty

Strategies and Governance

1.1 Vision & Mission

VISION

Our vision is to be the launchpad for India's most successful entrepreneurs and innovators.

MISSION

Enable deserving start-ups to transform useful innovations into profitable ventures with an eco-system of industry mentors, investor networks, academic research and constructive services and infrastructure.

1.2 Short-Term & Long-Term Goals

Resource Mobilisation

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 to reduce the organizational constraints to work on the entrepreneurial agenda.

1.2.1 Investment in the entrepreneurial activities should be a part of the institutional financial strategy. Minimum 1% fund of the total annual budget of the institution should be allocated for funding and supporting innovation and start-ups related activities through creation of separate 'Innovation fund'.

1.2.2 The strategy should also involve raising funds from diverse sources to reduce dependency on the public funding. Bringing in external funding through government (state and central) such as DST, DBT, MHRD, AICTE, TDB, TIFAC, DSIR, CSIR, BIRAC, NSTEDB, NRDC, ICSSR, Start-up India, Invest India, Meity, MSDE, MSME, etc. and non-government sources should be encouraged.

1.2.3 To support technology incubators, academic institutes may approach private and corporate sectors to generate funds, under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as per Section 135 of the Company Act 2013.

1.2.4 Institute may also raise funding through sponsorships and donations. Institute should actively engage alumni network for promoting Innovation & Entrepreneurship (I&E).

1.3 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.

1.4 Development of entrepreneurship culture should not be limited within the boundaries of the institution.

1.4.1 HEIs should be the driving force in developing entrepreneurship culture in its vicinity (regional, social and community level). This shall include giving opportunity for regional start-ups, provision to extend facilities for outsiders and

active involvement of the institute in defining strategic direction for local development.

2. Start-up Enabling Infrastructure

AIT has created a separate facility for housing the start-ups which can be used by students and faculty start-ups as well as the external start-ups.

2.1 This Pre-Incubation/Incubation facility should be accessible 24x7 to students, staff and faculty of all disciplines and departments across the institution.

2.2 HEIs should offer mentoring and other relevant services through Pre-incubation/Incubation units in-return for fees, equity sharing and/or zero payment basis. The modalities regarding Equity Sharing in Start-ups supported through these units will depend upon the nature of services offered by these units.

3. Nurturing Innovations and Start-Ups

3.1 AIT will establish a process to onboard and nurture start-ups by students (UG, PG, Ph.D.), staff, faculty, alumni and potential start up applicants even from outside the institutions.

3.2 Incubation Support: Offer access to pre-incubation & Incubation facility to start ups by students, staff and faculty for mutually acceptable timeframe.

3.3 AIT will allow their students/staff to work on innovative projects and setting up start-ups (including Social Start-ups) or work as intern / part-time in start-ups while studying/working. 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 multi- disciplinary. 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.

3.4 Students who are pursuing some entrepreneurial ventures in the institute's incubation centre while studying should be allowed to use the institute's address to register their company with due permission from the institution.

3.5 Student entrepreneurs actively working at the incubation centre should be allowed to sit for the examination, provided their attendance is at least 50 percent even though that is less than the minimum permissible percentage, with due permission from the institute.

3.6 AIT should provide accommodation, if required, to the entrepreneurs within the campus for required/decided time with the applicable charges.

3.7 AIT should 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 for working on start-ups and come back. Institution should allow its staff 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.

3.8 Institute should facilitate the start-up 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:

- Short-term/ six-month/ part-time entrepreneurship training.
- Mentorship support on regular basis.
- 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, product- costing, marketing, brand-development, human resource management as well as law and regulations impacting a business.
- Institute may also link the start-ups to other seed-fund providers/ angel funds/ venture funds or itself may set up seed-fund once the incubation activities mature.

3.9 In return of the services and facilities, institute may take 2% to 9.5% equity stake in the startup organization, based on brand used, faculty contribution, support provided and use of institute's IPR Other factors for consideration should be space, infrastructure, mentorship support, seed- funds, 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, provided they do not spend more than 20% of office time on the start-up 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 start-up, then they will go on LOP/ ETO.

3.10 The institute should also provide services based on mixture of equity, fee-based and/ or zero payment model. So, a start-up may choose to avail only the support, not seed funding, by the institute on rental basis.

3.11 Institute could extend this start-up facility to alumni of the institute as well as outsiders.

3.12 Participation in start-up related activities needs to be considered as a legitimate activity of faculty in addition to teaching, R&D projects, industrial consulting, 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 start-up.

3.13 Product development and commercialization as well as participating and nurturing of start-ups 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.

3.14 Institute should ensure that at no stage any liability accrue to it because of any activity of any start-up.

4. Product Ownership Rights for the Technologies developed at the Institute

4.1 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.

if.) 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

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

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

4.2 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.

4.3 If there is a dispute in ownership, a minimum five membered committee consisting of two faculty members (having developed sufficient IPR and translated to commercialization), two of the institute's alumni/ industry experts (having experience in technology commercialization) 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.

4.4 Interdisciplinary research and publication on start-up and entrepreneurship should be promoted by the institutions.

5. Organisational Capacity, Human Resource, and Incentives

5.1 Institute should appoint a lead for the innovation and entrepreneurship program who has a strong innovation and entrepreneurial/ industrial experience, behaviour, and attitude. This will help in fostering the Innovation & Entrepreneurship culture.

5.2 Periodically some external subject matter experts such as guest lecturers or alumni can be engaged for strategic advice and bringing in skills which are not available internally.

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

5.4 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.

5.4.1 The reward system for the staff may include sabbaticals, office and lab space

for entrepreneurial activities, reduced teaching loads, awards and trainings.

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

6. Creating Innovation Pipeline and Pathways for Entrepreneurs

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

6.1.1 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.

6.1.2 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.

6.2 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, start-up 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.

6.3 For strengthening the innovation funnel, AIT will provide start-ups access to their incubation centre ABIC as a supporting environment for the potential entrepreneurs. ABIC will provide premises at subsidised cost, laboratories, research facilities, IT services, training and mentoring.

6.3.1 ABIC will also provide an opportunity for the start-ups to access finance from Seed/Angel Investors/VC and other relevant modes of financing as applicable.

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

7. Norms for Faculty Start-ups

7.1.1 Role of faculty may vary from being an owner/ direct promoter, mentor, consultant or as on-board member of the start-up.

7.1.2 AIT norms mandate that there should not be any 'conflict of interests' between the start-up and the institute to ensure that the regular duties of the faculty do not suffer owing to his/her involvement in the start-up activities.

7.1.3 Faculty start-up may consist of faculty members alone or with students or with faculty of other institutes or with alumni or with other entrepreneurs.

7.2 In case the faculty/ staff holds the executive or managerial position for more than

three months in a start-up, they should go on sabbatical/ leave without pay/ utilize existing leave.

7.3 Faculty should clearly separate and distinguish on-going research at the institute from the work conducted at the start-up/ company.

7.4 In case of selection of a faculty start up by an outside national or international accelerator, a maximum leave (as sabbatical/ existing leave/ LOP/ ETO) of one semester/ year (or even more depending upon the decision of review committee constituted by the institute) should be permitted to the faculty.

7.5 Faculty should not accept gifts from the start-up.

7.6 Human subject related research in start-up should get clearance from ethics committee of the institution.

8. Pedagogy and Learning Interventions

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

8.1.2 AIT should arrange trainings to create awareness among the students about start up methodologies, discuss case studies on business failures and real-life experiences by start-ups. Students/ Faculty failures should be elaborately discussed and debated to imbibe that failure is a part of life, thus helping in reducing the social stigma associated with it.

8.1.3 Customized teaching and training materials should be developed for start-ups.

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

8.2 Entrepreneurship education should be imparted to students at curricular/ co-curricular/ extra- curricular 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.

8.2.1 Industry linkages should be leveraged for conducting research and survey on trends in technology, research, innovation, and market intelligence.

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

9.1 Stakeholder engagement should be given prime importance in the entrepreneurial agenda of AIT. We 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.

9.1.1 To encourage co-creation, bi-directional flow/exchange of knowledge and people should be ensured between institutes such as incubators and science parks.

9.1.2 Institute should organize networking events for better engagement of collaborators and should open the opportunities for staff, faculty and students to allow constant flow of ideas and knowledge through meetings, workshops, space for

collaboration and lectures.

10. Entrepreneurial Impact Assessment

10.1 Impact assessment of AIT's entrepreneurial initiatives such as pre-incubation, incubation, entrepreneurship education should be performed regularly using well defined evaluation parameters.

10.1.1 Monitoring and evaluation of knowledge exchange initiatives, engagement of all departments and faculty in the entrepreneurial teaching and learning should be assessed.

10.1.2 Number of start-ups 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.

10.1.3 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.