POLICY ON INNOVATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND STARTUPS

2026 Edition

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Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology

(Deemed to be University)

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DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Particulars	Details
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DOCUMENT CLASSIFICATION : This document constitutes an official policy of the Deemed to be University. The provisions of this policy shall be implemented and interpreted in accordance with the applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, and in conjunction with other relevant policies, regulations, ordinances, and guidelines of the Institution.

1. PREAMBLE

Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology (SIST) is committed to fostering a culture of innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship, and technology-driven societal transformation. The University recognizes that innovation and entrepreneurship play a critical role in economic growth, employment generation, sustainable development, and national competitiveness.In alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Startup India Mission, Atal Innovation Mission, National Innovation and Startup Policy (NISP), and other national initiatives, the University seeks to create an enabling ecosystem that encourages students, faculty members, researchers, alumni, and staff to transform innovative ideas into products, services, technologies, enterprises, and social innovations. This Policy establishes a framework to support innovation, entrepreneurship, startup creation, incubation, technology commercialization, industry engagement, and venture development while promoting responsible, ethical, and sustainable innovation practices.

2. OBJECTIVES

- Promote innovation, creativity, problem-solving, and entrepreneurial thinking among students, faculty, researchers, and staff.
- Facilitate the conversion of research outcomes and innovative ideas into commercially viable products, technologies, and services.
- Support the creation and growth of startups and technology-based enterprises.
- Strengthen industry-academia collaboration and technology transfer.
- Encourage multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary innovation.
- Promote innovation addressing societal, environmental, and sustainable development challenges.
- Facilitate access to incubation, mentoring, funding, and market opportunities.
- Create employment opportunities through entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Foster a culture of intellectual property creation and commercialization.
- Position the University as a leading innovation and startup ecosystem in India.

3. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This Policy shall apply to:

- Undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, and postdoctoral students.
- Faculty members, scientists, researchers, technical staff, and administrative staff.

- Alumni associated with innovation and startup activities.
- Startups incubated within the University ecosystem.
- Research centres, laboratories, innovation hubs, and incubation facilities established by the University.
- Collaborative projects involving industry, government agencies, NGOs, and international organizations.
- Startups utilizing University intellectual property, infrastructure, facilities, or institutional support.

4. DEFINITIONS

- "Innovation" means the development or improvement of products, processes, technologies, services, systems, or business models that create value.
- "Startup" means an entity established to develop innovative products, services, or business models with potential for scalability and growth.
- "Incubation" means structured support provided to startups and innovators for transforming ideas into sustainable ventures.
- "Entrepreneur" means an individual who initiates, develops, and manages an innovative venture.
- "Technology Transfer" means the process of transferring technologies, intellectual property, know-how, or innovations for commercial or societal application.
- "Incubatee" means an individual or startup receiving incubation support from the University.
- "Proof of Concept (PoC)" means preliminary validation demonstrating technical feasibility of an innovation.
- "Seed Funding" means early-stage financial support provided for startup development and validation.

5. INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION AND STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

The University shall establish and strengthen an integrated innovation ecosystem comprising:

- Innovation and Incubation Centre.
- Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Cell.
- Entrepreneurship Development Cell.
- Technology Transfer Office.
- Industry Collaboration Cell.
- Research and Development Directorate.
- Centres of Excellence and Research Centres.
- Student Innovation Clubs.
- Startup Mentorship Network.
- Investor and Industry Connect Platform.

The ecosystem shall facilitate ideation, prototyping, product development, intellectual property protection, commercialization, startup formation, and venture scaling.

6. INNOVATION AND STARTUP GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

6.1 Innovation and Startup Committee
The University shall constitute an Innovation and Startup Committee to oversee implementation of this Policy.

Composition

- Vice- Chancellor – Chairperson
- Director (Research and Development) – Co-Chair
- Head, Innovation and Incubation Centre – Member Secretary
- Director, Placement and Industry Relations
- Coordinator, IPR Cell
- Faculty Innovation Representatives
- Industry Expert(s)
- Startup Founder(s)
- Investor/Entrepreneur Representative(s)
- External Innovation Expert(s)

6.2 Functions

The Committee shall:

- Formulate innovation strategies.
- Review startup proposals.
- Recommend funding support.
- Approve incubation support.
- Monitor startup performance.
- Facilitate industry partnerships.
- Review policy implementation.

7. Support for Student Innovators and Entrepreneurs

The University shall encourage student entrepreneurship through:

- Innovation challenges and hackathons.
- Startup boot camps.
- Business plan competitions.
- Innovation fellowships.
- Startup mentoring.
- Access to laboratories and prototyping facilities.
- Seed funding opportunities.
- Industry networking opportunities.
- Intellectual property support.
- Market validation assistance.

Students shall be encouraged to develop startups while pursuing academic programmes subject to academic regulations.

8. SUPPORT FOR FACULTY AND STAFF ENTREPRENEURS

Faculty members and staff shall be encouraged to engage in innovation and entrepreneurship activities.

The University may permit:
- Participation in startup ventures.
- Consultancy related to startup activities.
- Technology commercialization.
- Industry collaboration projects.
- Equity participation in startups subject to disclosure requirements.
- Entrepreneurial leave or sabbatical as per University regulations.

Faculty entrepreneurship shall not adversely affect academic responsibilities and institutional commitments.

9. STARTUP FORMATION AND RECOGNITION

Students, faculty members, staff, researchers, and alumni may establish startups based on:
- Innovative ideas.
- Research outcomes.
- Intellectual property generated within the University.
- Technology transfer opportunities.
- Social innovation initiatives.
- Community development solutions.

The University may recognize startups that satisfy eligibility criteria prescribed by the Innovation and Startup Committee.

Preference may be provided to startups addressing:
- Deep Technology.
- Artificial Intelligence.
- Biotechnology& Bioinformatics
- Marine and Blue Economy Technologies.
- Renewable Energy.
- Climate Change and Sustainability.
- Space Technology.
- Healthcare Technologies.
- Agriculture and Food Technologies.
- Social Innovation.
- Space Technology
- Semi-conductors & Soft Matters
- EVs and Mechatronics
- Any other technologies aligned with S & Ts

10. USE OF UNIVERSITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

Recognized innovators and startups may be provided access to:

- Laboratories.
- Research facilities.
- Prototyping facilities.
- Fabrication and testing facilities.
- Computing resources.
- Co-working spaces.
- Meeting rooms.
- Library resources.
- Innovation centres.
- Specialized research infrastructure.

Such access shall be governed by prescribed rules, user agreements, safety regulations, and resource availability.The University may levy reasonable charges for use of facilities wherever necessary.

11. INCUBATION SUPPORT AND MENTORING

The University shall establish mechanisms to support innovators and startups through structured incubation programmes. Incubation support may include:

- Physical incubation facilities.
- Virtual incubation facilities.
- Technical mentoring.
- Business mentoring.
- Legal and regulatory guidance.
- Intellectual property support.
- Product design and development assistance.
- Market access support.
- Investor networking opportunities.
- Capacity-building and entrepreneurship training programmes.

The duration of incubation shall normally be determined by the nature and stage of the startup and may be extended upon recommendation of the Innovation and Startup Committee.

12. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Intellectual Property (IP) generated through innovation, research, startup activities, consultancy projects, sponsored research, or collaborative programmes shall be governed by the University's Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy.Innovators and startups shall be encouraged to protect their inventions, technologies, designs, software, trademarks, and other intellectual assets.The University shall facilitate:

- Patentability assessment.
- b. Prior-art search.
- c. Patent filing.
- d. Copyright registration.

- e. Trademark registration.
- f. Technology licensing.
- g. Commercialization of intellectual property.

Ownership of intellectual property shall be determined in accordance with the University's IPR Policy and applicable contractual agreements.

13. TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND COMMERCIALIZATION

The University shall encourage the translation of research outputs and innovative ideas into commercially viable products, services, technologies, and enterprises.Technology commercialization may be undertaken through:

- Licensing.
- Assignment.
- Joint development agreements.
- Startup creation.
- Industry partnerships.
- Social enterprise models.
- Public-private partnerships.

The University shall facilitate industry engagement for validation, scaling, and deployment of technologies developed within the institution.

14. EQUITY PARTICIPATION AND REVENUE SHARING

The University may participate in startup ventures based on technologies or intellectual property developed using University resources.
Such participation may include:

- Equity ownership.
- Revenue sharing.
- Royalty arrangements.
- Technology licensing fees.
- Milestone-based payments.

The extent of participation shall be determined by the Innovation and Startup Committee and approved by the competent authority.Where University-owned intellectual property is commercialized, revenue sharing shall be governed by the University's Intellectual Property Rights Policy.

15. CONSULTANCY, SPONSORED RESEARCH AND STARTUP ENGAGEMENT

Faculty members, researchers, and students may engage with startups through consultancy, sponsored research, technical services, testing, validation, and collaborative innovation projects.

Such engagements shall:
a. Comply with University regulations.

b. Avoid conflict of interest.
c. Protect intellectual property rights.
d. Maintain transparency and accountability.
e. Ensure appropriate use of University resources.

All agreements involving startups and external entities shall be executed through authorized University channels.

16. LEAVE, INCENTIVES AND WORKLOAD RELAXATION FOR FACULTY ENTREPRENEURS

To encourage entrepreneurship among faculty members, the University may provide:

- Entrepreneurial leave.
- Sabbatical leave.
- Flexible work arrangements.
- Reduced teaching workload.
- Recognition of startup achievements in performance evaluation.
- Incentives for commercialization and technology transfer.

Faculty members availing such benefits shall ensure continuity of academic, research, and administrative responsibilities through approved arrangements.The terms and duration of entrepreneurial leave shall be governed by separate University regulations.

17. ACADEMIC FLEXIBILITY FOR STUDENT ENTREPRENEURS

The University recognizes startup creation as a valuable experiential learning opportunity.Student entrepreneurs may be provided with academic flexibility, including:

- Consideration of startup work as project work, internship, field work, or experiential learning activity, subject to academic approval.
- Flexible timelines for assignment submission where justified.
- Permission to participate in innovation events, competitions, startup programmes, and incubation activities.
- Recognition of innovation achievements through institutional awards and incentives.
- Access to mentorship and entrepreneurial training.

Academic flexibility shall not compromise the academic standards and learning outcomes prescribed by the University.

18. FUNDING SUPPORT AND SEED FUNDING MECHANISMS

The University shall facilitate access to financial support through:

- Innovation grants.
- Proof-of-Concept (PoC) grants.
- Prototype development grants.
- Seed funding programmes.
- Startup competitions.

- Innovation fellowships.
- Government funding schemes.
- Corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.
- Angel investors.
- Venture capital networks.

The University may establish an Innovation and Startup Fund to support promising innovations and startup ventures.Funding support shall be provided based on merit, feasibility, innovation potential, societal impact, and commercialization prospects.

19. EXTERNAL FUNDING, GRANTS AND INVESTMENTS

The University shall facilitate access to external funding opportunities including:

- Startup India initiatives.
- Department of Science and Technology (DST) programmes.
- Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) schemes.
- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM).
- Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) programmes.
- Ministry of MSME schemes.
- Venture capital and angel investment networks.
- International innovation funding programmes.

The University may organize investor connect programmes, startup showcases, and innovation expos to facilitate fundraising opportunities.

20. CONFLICT OF INTEREST MANAGEMENT

Faculty members, staff, researchers, students, and startup founders shall disclose any actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest arising from startup or entrepreneurial activities.Conflict of interest situations may include:

- Financial interests.
- Equity ownership.
- Consultancy engagements.
- Procurement decisions.
- Licensing negotiations.
- Sponsored research arrangements.

The Innovation and Startup Committee shall review disclosures and recommend appropriate mitigation measures.

21. CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICAL PRACTICES

Innovators and startups associated with the University shall adhere to the highest standards of professional conduct, ethics, integrity, and legal compliance.Activities involving:

- Fraudulent practices.
- Plagiarism.

- Data falsification.
- Intellectual property infringement.
- Environmental violations.
- Human rights violations.
- Discriminatory practices.
- Unlawful activities.

shall not be permitted under any circumstances.All startups shall comply with applicable national laws, regulations, and University policies.

22. MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The Innovation and Startup Committee shall periodically review the performance of incubated startups and innovation programmes. Performance indicators may include:
a. Number of startups created.
b. Patents filed and granted.
c. Technologies commercialized.
d. Revenue generated.
e. Funding secured.
f. Employment created.
g. Societal impact achieved.
h. Industry collaborations established.

The University may establish annual innovation and startup performance targets and review mechanisms.

23. STARTUP GRADUATION, EXIT AND CLOSURE

A startup may graduate from incubation upon achieving:

- Commercial sustainability.
- Significant revenue generation.
- Successful investment acquisition.
- Technology commercialization.
- Expansion beyond incubation requirements.

*A startup may exit incubation voluntarily or upon completion of the approved incubation period.

The University reserves the right to discontinue incubation support in cases of:

- Policy violations.
- Misrepresentation.
- Non-performance.
- Unethical conduct.
- Legal non-compliance.

24. POLICY REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

This Policy shall be reviewed periodically, normally once every three years, or earlier if required.Amendments may be proposed by the Innovation and Startup Committee and approved by the competent authority of the University.The review process shall consider:

- National policy developments.
- Regulatory changes.
- Industry requirements.
- Emerging innovation ecosystems.
- Institutional priorities.

25. RESIDUARY CLAUSE

Any matter not specifically covered under this Policy shall be referred to the Vice-Chancellor for appropriate decision.The decision of the Vice- Chancellor shall be final and binding, subject to applicable statutory provisions and University regulations.

26. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Policy shall come into effect from the date of approval by the Executive Council of Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology.The Directorate of Research and Development, Innovation and Incubation Centre, Entrepreneurship Development Cell, and IPR Cell shall be responsible for implementing and monitoring this Policy. All departments, centres, schools, and stakeholders shall cooperate in fostering a vibrant innovation and startup ecosystem within the University.

Annexure I

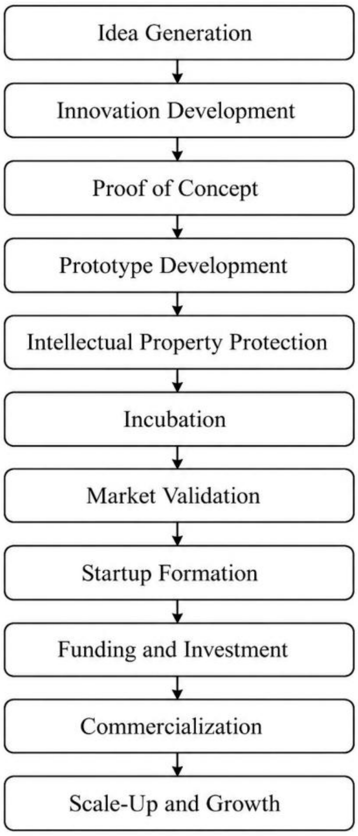
Priority Innovation Domains

The University shall encourage innovation and startup development in areas including:

1. Artificial Intelligence and Data Science
2. Biotechnology and Bioengineering
3. Marine Biotechnology and Blue Economy
4. Climate Change and Sustainability
5. Renewable Energy and Green Technologies
6. Ocean Science and Coastal Technologies
7. Space Technology and Satellite Applications
8. Robotics and Automation
9. Healthcare and Medical Technologies
10. Agriculture and Food Technologies
11. Smart Manufacturing
12. Educational Technologies
13. Circular Economy and Waste Management
14. Water Technologies
15. Social Innovation and Community Development

Annexure II

Innovation and Startup Lifecycle



Annexure III

The University may institute incentives for:

1. Startup creation.
2. Patent filing and commercialization.
3. Technology transfer.
4. National and international innovation awards.
5. Startup funding achievements.
6. Industry collaborations.
7. Social innovation initiatives.
8. Student entrepreneurship achievements.
9. Faculty innovation and startup leadership.
10. Successful startup exits and scale-up achievements.

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