
**INNOVATION AND
START UP POLICY
FOR STUDENTS AND
FACULTY
AIT**

**ATRIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Adjacent Bangalore Baptist Hospital,
Hebbal Bengaluru – 560024**

INDEX	PAGE NO.
Preamble	
Vision	
Mission	
Objectives	
Innovation and Startup Policy for Students and Faculty	
1. Strategies and Governance	
2. Startups Enabling Institutional Infrastructure	
3. Nurturing Innovations and Startups	
4. Product Ownership Rights for Technologies Developed at Institute	
5. Organizational Capacity, Human Resources and Incentives	
6. Creating Innovation Pipeline and Pathways for Entrepreneurs at Institute Level	
7. Norms for Faculty Startups	
8. Pedagogy and Learning Interventions for Entrepreneurship Development	
9. Collaboration, Co-creation, Business Relationships and Knowledge Exchange	
10. Entrepreneurial Impact Assessment	

PREAMBLE

Entrepreneurship and Start-up Policies play an imperative role in shaping the economic and social development of a nation.

This vision document envisages the creation of an effective apparatus to foster innovation and entrepreneurship at Atria Institute of Technology. It sets out vision, mission and objectives of the institute to inculcate innovation amongst faculty, undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral students, and charts out an ecosystem to promote startup ventures.

A committee was constituted by the institution to formulate this policy document for various aspects related to Innovation, Startup and Entrepreneurship activities at Atria Institute of Technology. This committee deliberated on various facets for nurturing the innovation and Startup culture in the institution for developing entrepreneurial agenda, managing Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) ownership, technology licensing and equity sharing in Startups or enterprises established by faculty and students as per the guidelines given by MHRD's Innovation Cell (MIC).

VISION

India is at the cusp of becoming the most populous nation on Earth in the next decade. With one of the youngest demographics in the world, it is imperative to embark on a mission to create a conducive entrepreneurial ecosystem, which can generate knowledge, value, jobs and prosperity to millions and multitudes in the country and solve some of the hard socio-economic problems afflicting the nation. In order to achieve the desired results, a proper fusion of knowledge, technology, business acumen, and understanding of socio-economic conditions is required to promote holistic entrepreneurship.

Atria Institute of Technology aims to build a unique interdisciplinary curriculum and knowledge ecosystem to foster such innovations and enhance the knowledge and entrepreneurial capital of the nation.

Our Vision is:

To develop a multi-disciplinary knowledge ecosystem on campus, with an emphasis on hands on training to incubate world class startups and entrepreneurs.

MISSION

The 'National Student and Faculty Startup policy 2019' is a guiding framework for the institution to envision an educational system oriented towards startups and entrepreneurship opportunities for student and faculties. The vision of MHRD's Innovation Cell (MIC) that proposes "**Innovation to be the epicenter of education**" is **aligned with the Institution's mission:**

Towards nurturing professionals who can add value to organizations, engage in higher studies and pursue innovative entrepreneurial activities.

OBJECTIVES

To facilitate development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Institution, the following objectives have been defined:

- a) Creation of a multi-disciplinary knowledge base, with curiosity and innovation as its base.
- b) Hands on training through workshops, discussions, lectures, field visits etc.
- c) Incubation of a startup hub, through strategic investments, knowledge support and market linkages.
- d) Promotion of products and services developed through the hub.
- e) Open door policy for innovative startups to leverage the incubation hub at Atria.
- f) Assistance in raising funds from venture capitalists, govt and non govt sources.

1. Strategies and Governance:

i) Resource mobilization:

Resource mobilization plan should be worked out at the institute for supporting pre-incubation, incubation infrastructure and facilities.

- a) 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 startups related activities through creation of separate **'Innovation fund'**.
 - b) 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, Startup India, Invest India, MeitY, MSDE, MSME, etc. and non-government sources should be encouraged.
 - c) To support technology incubators, the institution may approach private and corporate sectors **to generate funds, under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** as per Section 135 of the Company Act 2013.
 - d) Institute may also raise funding **through sponsorships and donations**. Institute should actively engage **alumni network** for promoting Innovation & Entrepreneurship (I&E). For this purpose, Alumni Cell should create a list of alumni who are potential HNI (High Networth Individual) and willing to support the Institution's Initiative for Innovation & Startup Incubation.
- ii) For expediting the decision making, hierarchical barriers to be minimized, a separate "Advisory Board for Innovation & Entrepreneurship" at the institution will be established.
- iii). 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.
- iv). Product to market strategy for startups should be developed by the institute on case-to-case basis.
- a) Development of entrepreneurship culture should not be limited within the boundaries of the institution.
 - b) AIT should be the driving force in developing entrepreneurship culture in its vicinity (regional, social and community level). This shall include giving opportunity for regional startups, provision to extend facilities for outsiders and active involvement of the institute in defining strategic direction for local development.

2. Startups Enabling Institutional 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.

- a. AIT aims to create facilities within the campus 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.
- b. This Pre-Incubation/Incubation facility will be accessible 24x7 to students, staff and faculty of all disciplines and departments across the institution.
- c. The Institution may offer mentoring and other relevant services through Pre-incubation/Incubation units in- return for fees, equity sharing and (or) zero payment basis.

3. Nurturing Innovations and Startups:

- i. 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.
- ii. Incubation Support: Offer access to pre-incubation & Incubation facility to start ups by students, staff and faculty for mutually acceptable timeframe.
- iii. AIT will allow their students/staff to work on innovative projects and setting up startups (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.
- iv. 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.
- v. 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.
- vi. AIT should provide accommodation, if required, to the entrepreneurs within the campus for required/decided time with the applicable

- charges.
- vii. 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.
- viii. 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.
- ix) 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.
- x) 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.
- xi) Institute could extend this start-up facility to alumni of the institute as well as outsiders.
- xii) 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.

- xiii) 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.
- xiv) 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 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 organization, 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. 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 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.
- 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 non-institute funds, then they alone should have a say in patenting.
- e. All 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 .
- f. Interdisciplinary research and publication on startup and entrepreneurship should be promoted by the institutions.

5. Organizational Capacity, Human Resources and Incentives

- a. The Institution will recruit staff that have a strong innovation and entrepreneurial/ industrial experience, behavior, and attitude. This will help in fostering the Innovation and Entrepreneurship culture.
 - i) Some of the relevant faculty members with prior exposure and interest should 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 institute should 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.

- c. 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.
- d. Faculty and staff should be encouraged to do courses on innovation, entrepreneurship management and venture development.
- e. To attract and retain right people, HR of the institute should develop academic and non-academic incentives and reward mechanisms for all staff and stakeholders(proposal) 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, associateships, 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

- i. 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.
- 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.
- iv. Institution's Innovation Council (IIC) of AIT has been established as per the guidelines of MHRD's Innovation Cell. It will conduct various activities related to innovation, startup and entrepreneurship development.
- v. 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(are we still using the name) will provide premises at subsidized cost, laboratories, research facilities, IT services, training and mentoring.

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

7. Norms for Faculty Startups:

- a. (i) Role of faculty may vary from being an owner/ direct promoter, mentor, consultant or as on-board member of the startup.
 - ii) 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
 - iii) Faculty startup may consist of faculty members alone or with students or with faculty of other institutes or with alumni or with other entrepreneurs.
- b. In case the faculty/ staff holds the executive or managerial position for more than three months in a startup, they will go on sabbatical/ leave without pay/ utilize existing leave.
- c. Faculty must clearly separate and distinguish on-going research at the institute from the work conducted at the startup/ company.
- d. In case of selection of a faculty start up by an outside national or international accelerator, a maximum leave (as sabbatical/ existing leave/ unpaid leave/ casual leave/ earned leave) of one semester/ year (or even more depending upon the decision of review committee constituted by the institute) may be permitted to the faculty.
- e. Faculty must not accept gifts from the startup.
- f. Faculty must not involve research staff or other staff of institute in activities at the startup and vice-versa.
- g. Human subject related research in startup should get clearance from ethics committee of the institution.

8. Pedagogy and Learning Interventions for Entrepreneurship Development

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. Student clubs/ bodies/ departments must be created for organizing competitions, bootcamps, workshops, awards, etc.

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

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

iv) 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/ cocurricular/ 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.

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

c. Sensitization of students should be done for their understanding on expected learning outcomes.

d. Student innovators, startups, experts must be engaged in the dialogue process while developing the strategy so that it becomes need based.

e. Customized teaching and training materials should be developed for startups.

f. 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 Institution for inculcating entrepreneurial culture should be constantly reviewed and updated.

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

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.

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

b) Institute should organize networking events for better engagement of collaborators and should open up the opportunities for staff, faculty and students to allow constant flow of ideas and knowledge through meetings, workshops, space for collaboration, lectures, etc.

c) Mechanism should be developed by the institute to capitalize on

the knowledge gained through these collaborations.

2. The institute should develop policy and guidelines for forming and managing the relationships with external stakeholders including private industries.
3. Knowledge exchange through collaboration and partnership should be made a part of institutional policy and institutes must provide support mechanisms and guidance for creating, managing and coordinating these relationships.
 - 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 inhouse Information & Communication Technology (ICT) capabilities

10. Entrepreneurial Impact Assessment

- a. Impact assessment of AIT'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.


PRINCIPAL
Principal
Atria Institute of Technology
Anandanagar, Bengaluru-24