NERIST Innovation and Startup Policy

Executive Summary

The North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology (NERIST) presents a comprehensive framework for fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and startup development among students, faculty, and staff. This policy establishes systematic procedures for ideation, incubation, and commercialization of technology-driven ventures while maintaining academic excellence and institutional integrity.

1. Operational Framework

1.1 Student-Faculty Governance Protocol

Problem Identification and Solution Development: Students and student groups must identify realistic problem statements directly addressing societal challenges within **science, technology, engineering, humanities, social sciences, and management domains.** Innovative solutions must achieve Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 3 at a minimum, with comprehensive documentation submitted through **the dedicated link on the NERIST website.**

Competition Participation: By default, all submitted innovations qualify for various startup contests hosted by institutions and industries alike. All requests for such participation have to be routed through and forwarded by the Institution's Innovation Council of NERIST.

Mentorship and Prototype Development: Each student group receives dedicated faculty or Industry mentorship, depending on the proposed idea, for prototype development, achieving a minimum of TRL 5 standards. NERIST will provide comprehensive laboratory facilities and technical support, wherever possible, for prototype creation. In case such institutional facilitation is not possible, NERIST will explore options for providing laboratory access in other institutions and R&D organizations.

Expert Evaluation and Startup Eligibility: Independent expert panels evaluate prototypes based on technological potency, market viability, and commercial potential. Successful candidates proceed to formal business entity registration as Partnership Firms, Limited Liability Partnerships, Private Limited Companies, or One Person Companies.

Incubation Pathway: Qualified startups gain admission to NERIST Technology Business Incubator (NERIST-TBI) for comprehensive business development support and market entry facilitation.

Faculty Provisions: Faculty members may bypass initial ideation and competition stages, proceeding directly to registration and incubation phases while adhering to all subsequent procedural requirements.

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2. Eligibility Criteria

2.1 Category I: Pre-Incubation Track

Faculty, academic staff, and students of NERIST pursuing novel technological innovations for commercial application qualify for pre-incubation support. Participants must demonstrate genuine commercialisation intent and progress to Category II within twelve months of program commencement.

2.2 Category II: Technology-Based Startup Companies

First-generation entrepreneurs promoting technology-based ventures seeking R&D partnerships with the institute qualify under this category.

Eligibility extends to:

(i) Faculty members of NERIST

(ii) Staff members of NERIST

(iii) Researchers, alumni, and students of NERIST

(iv) **External promoters.**

(v) **Incubates willing to register as a company shall have to submit the documents as required within three months of expressing interest and registration through the NERIST portal.**

(vi) Technology-driven enterprises in engineering, sciences, management, and social sciences disciplines offering innovative products, ideas, or services

3. Admission Procedures

All applicants shall register through the **NERIST website** with complete documentation:

Category I: Detailed idea descriptions and technical specifications

Category II: Comprehensive business plans, registration certificates, and operational details

Admission confirmation will be shared through the official website following the evaluation committee review.

4. Innovation and Startup Development

4.1 Comprehensive Support Framework

NERIST shall establish systematic processes for startup creation and nurturing by students, staff, faculty, alumni, and external applicants, ensuring:

(i) Incubation Infrastructure:

(i) Pre-incubation and incubation facility access for mutually acceptable timeframes.

(ii) Flexible licensing arrangements for institute-developed intellectual property

(iii) Equity-based and royalty-based technology transfer options **as defined and decided from time to time.**

(ii) Academic Integration: *

(i) Promote entrepreneurship among students, researchers, and faculty.

(ii) Enable knowledge and technology transfer from academia to industry.

(iii) Part-time startup engagement while pursuing studies or employment.

(iv) Academic credit allocation for students involved in innovative prototype development.

(v) Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary startup opportunities.

(vi) Alternative project arrangements replacing traditional coursework/ Internship components

(iii) Operational Flexibility: *

(i) Single-window clearance system for startup registrations, licenses, and permits.

(ii) Institutional address usage for company registration with proper authorization.

(iii) Examination participation despite attendance shortfalls with institutional permission.

(iv) Semester or academic year breaks for students involved in intensive startup development.

(v) Academic credit recognition for entrepreneurial activities.

(Subject to academic regulations and ratification by the Academic Council)*

(iv) Professional Development:

(i) Part-time and full-time specialised degree programs in innovation and entrepreneurship.

(ii) Infrastructure and facility access for technology development.

(iii) Comprehensive mentorship and training programs.

(iv) Financial management, business planning, and marketing support

4.2 Equity and Revenue Sharing

The institute may acquire 1% **equity initially, or as defined and decided from time to time,** in startups based on brand utilisation, faculty contribution, institutional support, and intellectual property usage. For staff and faculty, equity limitations ensure no more than

15% of their individual shareholding, within the overall institutional cap, **as defined and decided from time to time.**

Operational Guidelines: Faculty and staff may dedicate **manhours equivalent to the permissible number of Duty Leaves, Special Casual Leaves, and vacations in a year to perform advisory roles in the startups.**

5. Pre-Incubation Framework

5.1 Developmental Phases

Problem Identification: Field visits to villages, hospitals, urban areas, and various sectors for practical problem visualization and solution development.

Idea Generation and Submission: Novel, innovative solutions addressing real-world problems submitted through standardised online formats, potentially qualifying for different hackathons and other contests.

Evaluation and Selection: Presentation-based evaluation by expert committees for idea screening and shortlisting based on technical merit and commercial viability.

Enhancement and Mentoring: Selected ideas undergo comprehensive workshops, webinars, and lecture series with dedicated NERIST faculty mentorship for incubation preparation.

Business Planning: Specialized workshops on business plan development featuring renowned industry and academic experts, requiring market analysis and strategic planning presentations.

Prototype Development: Final prototype creation under direct faculty or mentor supervision with comprehensive testing and validation procedures.

5.2 Registration and Admission Requirements

- Basic idea testing and validation before incubation application
- Promoter detail verification and validation
- Formal business entity registration with certificate provision
- Technology Business Incubator admission for approved Government of India facilities

6. Incubation Services

6.1 Infrastructure Provision

Individual Company Facilities: - Dedicated office space with internet connectivity - Reception and administrative support services - Laboratory access and technical resource utilization.

Shared Infrastructure: - File servers, laser printing, and photocopying facilities - Scanning, shredding, and teleconferencing equipment - Meeting rooms with projection capabilities - Pantry facilities and secretarial support

Technical Support: - Departmental laboratory and equipment access through formal request procedures - Commercial usage rates conforming to institutional consultancy policies - Equipment augmentation benefiting respective departments

6.2 Business Development Services

NERIST will provide the following services:

Mentorship Programs:

(i) Technology expert panels for specialized guidance

(ii) **Quarterly** strategic reviews with NERIST-**TIH** leadership/Industry-specific mentors for targeted consultation.

(iii) Professional consulting access for all incubated companies.

Market Development:

(i) Market research and opportunity identification services.

(ii) Business valuation and competitor analysis

(iii) Customer identification and market sizing studies

(iv) Marketing strategy formulation and implementation support

Training and Development:

(i) Business management and communication courses

(ii) Software and Library support

(iii) Knowledge repositories featuring successful company experiences

(iv) Networking events and technology showcase opportunities

7. Intellectual Property Management

7.1 Evaluation Framework

The Intellectual Property Sub-Committee (IPsC) manages all IP-related activities under the chairpersonship of the Director, NERIST, or his nominee, with the **four** faculty members **drawn from sciences, engineering and technology, humanities and social sciences, and management**, providing multidisciplinary technical expertise.

The IP Evaluation Criteria will include ownership determination and intellectual contribution assessment, Innovation qualification under Indian and international statutes, commercial viability, and market potential of the pitched idea.

7.2 Ownership and Revenue Sharing

Joint Ownership: When institute facilities or curriculum-based development occurs, IP ownership is shared between inventors and the institute.

Individual Ownership: IP developed independently without institutional resources, outside office hours, or beyond curricular requirements remains entirely with inventors.

Dispute Resolution: Committees, including experienced faculty, alumni, industry experts, and legal advisors, will resolve ownership disputes through collaborative consultation.

8. Organizational Development

8.1 Human Resource Strategy

- Recruitment prioritizing innovation and entrepreneurial experience
- Faculty training and development programs for entrepreneurship promotion
- Performance evaluation policy modifications incorporating startup activities
- Cross-departmental collaboration strengthening through shared resources and expertise

8.2 Incentive Mechanisms

- Sabbatical opportunities and dedicated workspace allocation
- Reduced teaching loads and specialized award recognition
- Professional development training and facility access
- Performance matrix implementation for annual evaluation standardization

9. Innovation Ecosystem Development

9.1 Awareness and Education

- Entrepreneurship value education integrated into institutional curriculum
- Innovation training emphasizing societal problem-solving approaches
- Experiential learning through design thinking and critical analysis
- Regular competitions, workshops, and expert interaction programs

9.2 Support Infrastructure

- Institution Innovation Council establishment per MHRD guidelines
- Financing access facilitation for potential entrepreneurs
- Networking event organization connecting entrepreneurs with investors
- Innovation toolkit development and website accessibility

10. Faculty Startup Provisions

10.1 Operational Guidelines

- Technology origin requirements limited to NERIST-developed innovations
- Variable faculty roles including ownership, mentorship, consultation, and board participation
- Conflict of interest policies ensuring regular duty fulfillment
- Collaborative arrangements with students, faculty, alumni, and external entrepreneurs

10.2 Leave and Engagement Policies

- Sabbatical arrangements for executive positions **(COO, CEO, Founders, and Co-founders)** exceeding three months, **as per the extant provisions of the rules and Institute Bye-laws.**
- Clear research activity separation between the institute and startup operations
- International accelerator selection accommodating extended leave requirements
- Ethical guidelines prohibiting gift acceptance and staff involvement in conflicts.

11. Collaboration and Partnership Framework

11.1 Stakeholder Engagement

External partnership development with potential resource organizations, MSMEs, social enterprises, educational institutions, alumni networks, and professional bodies supporting entrepreneurship program co-design and implementation.

11.2 Knowledge Exchange Mechanisms

Formal and informal collaboration through internships, teaching exchanges, research programs, social gatherings, and professional development initiatives connecting institutional stakeholders with external entrepreneurial ecosystems.

12. Assessment and Evaluation

12.1 Impact Measurement

Regular evaluation using defined parameters including: - Knowledge exchange initiative monitoring and departmental engagement assessment - Startup creation metrics and institutional support system evaluation - Business relationship development and participant satisfaction tracking - Social, financial, and technological market impact measurement

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12.2 Strategic Development

Impact assessment information actively utilized for entrepreneurial strategy development and review, ensuring sustainable social, financial, and technological market impact achievement.

13. Legal Framework

13.1 Conflict of Interest Management

Inventor disclosure requirements for potential conflicts involving personal or family stakes in licensee companies, ensuring entrepreneurial activities do not adversely impact teaching, research, and institutional responsibilities.

13.2 Required Agreements

Mandatory Documentation:

(i) Incubation agreements between NERIST and incubated companies

(ii) Non-disclosure agreements for R&D service provision

(iii) Equity agreements defining institutional shareholding arrangements

(iv) Technology transfer and licensing agreements for IP commercialisation

(v) Loan agreements for seed funding provision

(vi) Laboratory usage agreements for departmental resource access

14. Institutional Disclaimers

14.1 Responsibility Limitations

NERIST explicitly disclaims responsibility for:

(i) Ensuring the incubated company's success, product marketability, or service quality.

(ii) Guaranteeing complete satisfaction with institutional support services.

(iii) Managing consultant service quality engaged through institutional networks.

14.2 Risk Acknowledgement

Technology transfer occurs without feasibility guarantees, and NERIST assumes no liability for incubated company actions, omissions, or operational decisions.

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15. Administrative Provisions

15.1 Policy Review

This policy remains subject to periodic review and amendment at NERIST's discretion, ensuring alignment with evolving educational, technological, and market requirements.

15.2 Dispute Resolution

All disputes require arbitration referral to the Director, NERIST or designated representative, with final and binding decisions rendered at **Itanagar** as the designated arbitration venue.
