



YENEPOYA

(Deemed to be University)

Recognized under Sec 3(A) of UGC Act, 1956
Accredited by NAAC with 'A' Grade

University Startup Policy

Table of Contents

ARTICLE 1 - PREFACE.....	2
ARTICLE 2 - DEFINITIONS	3
ARTICLE 3 – SCOPE OF THE POLICY.....	5
ARTICLE 4 – GOVERNANCE AND OPERATION	6
ARTICLE 5 – INVOLVEMENT OF FACULTY/STAFF MEMBERS IN STARTUPS.....	6
ARTICLE 6 – INVOLVEMENT OF STUDENTS IN STARTUPS.....	8
ARTICLE 7 – USE OF UNIVERSITY RESOURCES AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY.....	9
ARTICLE 8 – UNIVERSITY SUPPORT AND INCENTIVES.....	10
ARTICLE 9 - DISPUTE	12

ARTICLE 1 - PREFACE

1.1. Context and University Mission

- 1.1.1. The core mission of the Yenepoya (Deemed to be University) (“University”) is creation of knowledge through scientific research which can reach the masses and impact the society.
- 1.1.2. The University recognises the impact entrepreneurship can have in terms of identifying and solving scientific and technical challenges and acknowledges the role of Startups in commercialising the Intellectual Property (IP) emanating from its Research activities.
- 1.1.3. The University will endeavour to promote entrepreneurship to be taken up by its Staff and Students and it prioritises commercialisation of its IP in a manner that encourages and fosters entrepreneurship by Staff Members and others.
- 1.1.4. The University has established an incubator which is incorporated as a Section 8, not for profit, organization on 17th May 2019 with a vision to accelerate the growth of healthcare innovation and the entrepreneurial ecosystem. It nurtures research and innovations by providing infrastructure, mentoring, funding support and market access, thereby promoting enterprise creation.
- 1.1.5. The incubator has high-end facilities for manufacturing medical devices, biomedical implants, and pharma products including drugs and injectables. Key facilities include 3D Printing, CNC Machining, 3D Bioprinting, PCB Fabrication, Injection Moulding, Cleanrooms etc. Also, it has a brainstorming area, meeting rooms, coworking spaces and dedicated office spaces for startups and innovators.
- 1.1.1. The objectives of the incubator are,
 - To identify, foster & mentor innovators / entrepreneurs in medical innovation process encompassing need identification, conception and implementation.
 - To encourage co-creation by involving students, faculty and professionals from multiple disciplines.
 - Establish a channel for commercialization of University’s research and patents.
 - Provide necessary state-of-the-art infrastructure for prototyping, product development, testing and clinical validation.
 - Promote commercialization by liaising with funding partners.
 - To organize short-term workshops, boot camps and internship programs to raise awareness and motivate different stakeholders towards healthcare innovation.

1.2. Purpose of the Startup Policy

- 1.2.1. **Promotion of Entrepreneurship.** The intent of the Startup Policy is to foster entrepreneurial ecosystem which encourages co-creation by involving students, faculty and professionals from multiple disciplines. Also, it lays down guidelines for the involvement of the University's Staff and Students. This policy also provides guidelines, policies and procedures for the startups and innovators to interact with and benefit from the incubator.
- 1.2.2. **Entrepreneurship management.** The Startup Policy seeks to set the framework for the involvement of the University's Staff and Students in Commercialising University's Research into products, services and processes. It encourages Staff Members, Students and Visitors to become Entrepreneurs. It also establishes clear rules and procedures for the creation/participation of Staff and Student led Startups which may or may not be based on the University IP.
- 1.2.3. **Entrepreneurship guidance.** The University has established Technology Incubator on the University campus to provide entrepreneurs with the necessary guidance, mentorship and infrastructure support in order to nurture their ideas and help translate them into successful Startups.
- 1.2.4. **Balance of interests.** The Startup Policy seeks to reiterate that the employee's primary commitment of time and intellectual contributions should be to the education, research and other obligations of the University and they have a primary professional obligation to act in the best interests of the University. Hence, care must be taken to avoid any cases of Conflict of Interest (COI) and Conflict of Commitment (COC) by all the Staff Members, Students and Visitors of the University.

ARTICLE 2 - DEFINITIONS

Without prejudice to any applicable laws, in this Policy the definitions set out below shall apply:

- 2.1 **Appointment.** A formal agreement for a Visitor at the University, which is a prerequisite to participate in or conduct Research, scholarship, creative work, or teaching at the University.
- 2.2 **Author.** Any person to whom this Policy is applicable, who individually or jointly with others makes a design, a mark or copyrightable work and who meets the criteria for authorship under the IP laws of India.
- 2.3 **Conflict of Commitment (COC).** Any situation in which an individual Staff Member's or Visitor's primary professional loyalty is not to the University because the time

devoted to outside activities adversely affects their capacity to meet their responsibilities as set out in their employment contract of Appointment, respectively.

- 2.4 **Conflict of Interest (COI).** Any situation in which real or perceived interests of an individual Staff Member, Visitor or Student may run counter to the interests of the University or negatively affect their employment or duties.
- 2.5 **Gross Non-IP Revenue.** All revenue received by the University for Execution of Projects / Scientific or Clinical Work as part of the Research Contract before any cost recovery or deductions for the incurred Expenses, as defined in Article 7.
- 2.6 **University.** Yenepoya (Deemed to be University).
- 2.7 **University IP.** IP owned or co-owned by the University.
- 2.8 **Incubator.** Yenepoya Foundation for Technology Incubation, which is an initiative of Yenepoya (Deemed to be University) and incorporated as a Section 8, not-for-profit, organization.
- 2.9 **Intellectual Property (IP).** All outputs of creative endeavour in any field at the University for which legal rights may be obtained or enforced pursuant to the law. IP may include:
- a. literary works, including publications in respect of Research results, and associated materials, including drafts, data sets and laboratory notebooks;
 - b. teaching and learning materials;
 - c. other original literary, dramatic, musical or artistic works, sound recordings, films, broadcasts, and typographical arrangements, multimedia works, photographs, drawings, and other works created with the aid of University resources or facilities;
 - d. databases, tables or compilations, computer software, preparatory design material for a computer program, firmware, courseware, and related material;
 - e. patentable and non-patentable technical information;
 - f. designs including layout designs (topographies) of integrated circuits;
 - g. plant varieties and related information;
 - h. trade secrets;
 - i. know-how, information and data associated with the above; and
 - j. any other University-commissioned works not included above.
- 2.10 **IP Management Cell (IPMC).** The administrative unit established by the University and responsible for day-to-day management of all IP-related activities of the University.
- 2.11 **Policy.** This, Yenepoya (Deemed to be University) Innovation and Startup Policy.
- 2.12 **Staff Member.** Any person who is under a contract of employment with the University including academic, research, technical, administrative and adjunct staff, whether full-time or part-time or on a temporary basis.

- 2.13 **Student.** Any student registered for an approved course at the University.
- 2.14 **Substantial Use.** Extensive use of the University’s resources which include but are not limited to facilities, equipment, human resources or funds. Not included is routine use of libraries and/or office space or the IP has been written or developed in the personal (unpaid) time of the Inventor.
- 2.15 **University Incubator.** Yenepoya Foundation for Technology Incubation, also referred to as Yenepoya Technology Incubator (YTI) or Incubator or Technology Incubator.
- 2.16 **Visitor.** Any person who is neither a Staff Member nor a Student of the University who engages in work at the University, including visiting professors, adjunct and conjoint professors, teachers, researchers, scholars and volunteers; and who concludes an Appointment agreement with the University.

ARTICLE 3 – SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 3.1. **Scope.** This Startup Policy along with other University policies such as Intellectual Property (IP) policy, Research Policy, etc. are aimed at providing clarity and guidance to all Staff Members, Students and Visitors in order to promote Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship ecosystem in the University.
- 3.2. **Applicability.** This Policy applies to all Staff Members, Students and Visitors who are willing to or may have started a commercialisation entity (Company/Startup) which may or may not be based on the University IP. Rights and obligations under this Policy shall survive any termination of employment, enrolment or Appointment at the University.
- 3.3. **Binding effect of the Policy.** This Policy constitutes an understanding that is binding on the University, Staff Members, Students and Visitors.
- 3.4. **Composition of Companies/Startups.** This University encourages and promotes the following compositions for the companies.
- 3.4.1. Companies jointly owned by the Staff Members and Graduating Students/Alumni (along with possibly others)
 - 3.4.2. Companies owned by the Staff Members (one or many) along with possibly others.
 - 3.4.3. Companies owned by the Graduating Students, Alumni along with possibly others

In such cases, the Staff Members and Students will be known as founding members of the board of the company. The use of the term 'company' throughout this document refers to the types of companies mentioned above unless specified otherwise.

The above companies may be incorporated as a One Person Company (OPC) or Private Limited Company or a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) or any other legally recognised entity as per the laws.

ARTICLE 4 – GOVERNANCE AND OPERATION

4.1. **Responsibilities.** The ultimate decision making authority with respect to this policy will be the Vice Chancellor of the University.

4.2. Entrepreneurship Promotion Cell (EPC)

4.2.1. **Purpose.** The University has established an Entrepreneurship Promotion Cell (EPC) to assist the University in the promotion of entrepreneurship and organising relevant activities.

4.2.2. **Responsibilities.** The responsibilities of the EPC shall include, but are not limited to:

- a. Outreach/awareness;
- b. Relationship management with potential entrepreneurs, Staff and Student led Startups.
- c. Coordinating with the IPMC for IP licensing.
- d. Coordinating with the Incubator to provide the entrepreneurs with the necessary guidance, mentorship and infrastructure support in order to nurture their ideas and help translate them into successful Startups.
- e. Coordinating with all relevant units of the University for facilitating mentorship, access to the facilities and necessary support to the Startups for the overall promotion of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship ecosystem of the University.
- f. Organising entrepreneurship promotion activities and events.

ARTICLE 5 – INVOLVEMENT OF FACULTY/STAFF MEMBERS IN STARTUPS

5.1. Role of the Faculty/Staff Members in the startups

5.1.1. It is expected that the staff members would be owners/promoters of startups defined in Article 3 and be one of the Directors on the Board.

5.1.2. The staff member may choose to play an operational role in the Startup such as CEO, COO, CSO, CTO, MD, etc.

5.1.3. The staff member may choose to play an advisory role in the Startup such as Advisor, Mentor, Consultant, etc.

5.2. Startup engagement, leaves and balance of interest

The faculty/staff member willing to play a substantial role in a startup as described above may choose one of the following options in order to avail off from the work for up to 2 years subject to approval from the University:

- 5.2.1. The faculty/staff member may dedicate up to 4 working days per month to Startup related activities.
- 5.2.2. The faculty/staff member may continue to work part-time in their startups.
- 5.2.3. The faculty/staff member may take a sabbatical and work full-time in the startup.
- 5.2.4. The faculty/staff member avail break to work full-time in the startup in the form of any accrued leaves such as casual leave, earned leave, commuted leave, etc or unpaid leave.
- 5.2.5. The faculty/staff member may be allowed to participate in short-term programs such as Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDP), Faculty Development Programs (FDP), Conferences, Workshops, Hackathons, Mentoring Sessions, Project Presentations, etc. with due permission as per the University norms.
- 5.2.6. The faculty/staff member may be allowed to participate in part-time long-term innovations and entrepreneurship programs.

5.3. Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment

- 5.3.1. It should be noted that the staff should take all possible steps to ensure that his/her duties and responsibilities of the University take precedence over all other activities.
- 5.3.2. In case the faculty/staff member has taken up a full-time executive role in the startup and is unable to balance his/her commitment towards the duties and responsibilities of the University for more than three months such staff member should opt for leave as described in section 5.2.
- 5.3.3. The staff member must have a clear demarcation between the duties and responsibilities at the University and the Startups. The staff members must separate research work and the research staff at the University and the startup.

ARTICLE 6 – INVOLVEMENT OF STUDENTS IN STARTUPS

6.1. Role of the Students in the startups

- 6.1.1. The students enrolled under various programs of the University are allowed to be owners/promoters of startups defined in Article 3 and be one of the Directors on the Board.
- 6.1.2. The students may choose to play an operational role in the Startup such as CEO, COO, CSO, CTO, MD, etc.
- 6.1.3. The students may choose to work as an intern or part-time in the Startup.

6.2. Startup engagement and leaves

- 6.2.1. Students will be free to dedicate any time outside their regular academic hours and duties towards their companies.
- 6.2.2. The student may be allowed special leave towards startup activities except during the time of their scheduled exams.
- 6.2.3. The students may be allowed to participate in short-term programs such as Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDP), Faculty Development Programs (FDP), Conferences, Workshops, Hackathons, Mentoring Sessions, Project Presentations, etc. with due permission as per the University norms.
- 6.2.4. The students may be allowed to participate in part-time long-term innovations and entrepreneurship programs.
- 6.2.5. The students may be allowed to take a semester or year break from their studies in order to be involved in the startup and may be allowed to rejoin the academics to complete the course.
- 6.2.6. In case the student entrepreneur has less attendance than the permissible limit due to engagement in the startup related activities, he/she may be permitted to appear for the examination with due permission from the University.

6.3. Academic requirements, credits, theses and dissertation

The following provisions are made available to the students through this policy subject to its applicability and the guidelines of the relevant governing/statutory body and the provisions of the enrolled course.

- 6.3.1. The student may earn academic credits for working on their innovative prototypes and startups.
- 6.3.2. The student may be allowed to opt for startups towards the fulfilment of academic requirements towards their mini project, major project, seminars, theses, dissertation and summer training.

6.4. Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment

The students must have a clear demarcation between their academic work, research work and the research staff at the University and the startup.

ARTICLE 7 – USE OF UNIVERSITY RESOURCES AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

7.1. Use of University and Incubator Infrastructure

- 7.1.1. The Staff Members and Students who are the promoters of the Startup housed in the University Incubator may be allowed to use University resources such as labs and other such facilities for their startup related activities. Use of any such facilities and resources may not be charged during the incubation period, except for facilities and instruments which are not free for internal users. To enable free access to the staff and student led companies, equity may be retained by the University which will also ensure IP ownership by the company as detailed in section 6.3.
- 7.1.2. The University resources are generally not accessible to anyone who is not associated with the University, either as an employee or a student. When involving company employees who are not associated with the University, permission from the facility in charge or department head will be required.
- 7.1.3. The Staff Members, Students, Visitors and Startup Employees can utilise the space and resources of the University Incubator which includes high-end facilities for manufacturing medical devices, biomedical implants, and pharma products, including drugs and injectables.
- 7.1.4. The Staff Members, Students, Visitors and Startup Employees will have access to brainstorming areas, meeting rooms, coworking spaces and dedicated office spaces at the University Incubator based on availability and the norms of the University Incubator.
- 7.1.5. The University will provide other tangible and intangible supports and services, including access to a pool of mentors and domain experts in technology, clinical, IP, regulatory, legal, financial, and related matters, with or without consideration.

7.2. Intellectual Property

- 7.2.1. If a Staff or a Student intends to base their Startup on the University owned IP for which they may or may not be the inventors, they will be required to incubate their company in the University Incubator. Licensing or allocation of the IP will be governed as per the University IP Policy.
- 7.2.2. In case the Staff or Student led Startup is based on IP not owned by the University or if no IP is involved, they may be free to incubate their company either in the University Incubator or outside the University.
- 7.2.3. The Promoters at the time of incubation should declare the Intellectual Property developed and owned by the incubated company. Any new IP developed, acquired or filed by the company during the incubation period should be notified to the authorised personnel of the incubator.
- 7.2.4. Any IP developed by the incubated company while using University resources shall be the property of the company provided the University has been sufficiently compensated. However, before filing such an application, a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the IP cell of the University is necessary, and the company is expected to grant a non-exclusive, royalty-free license to the University limited to non-commercial purposes.

ARTICLE 8 – UNIVERSITY SUPPORT AND INCENTIVES

The University is committed to promotion of Innovation and Entrepreneurship ecosystem and has taken various measures to ensure the same. The following outlines a few of the aspects where the University intends to support its Staff Members and Students.

- 8.1. **Incorporation.** The University may support the staff members and the students in the incorporation of the company in the form of incorporation fees and guidance. This may also include support extended to the company for annual maintenance of the company and any charges incurred towards its compliance. The University may offer assistance in connecting with professionals for company compliances, legal, regulatory, intellectual property, market assessment and other qualified practitioners to provide assistance in various stages of the Company and its product development.
- 8.2. **Funding.** The University may provide funding support to the companies in the form of grant in aid, seed grant and loan. The University may also invest / co-invest but will not be under any obligation to do so. Equity in the supported companies may be taken up as described in this document. The University through the Incubator shall endeavour to connect and demonstrate the Company to the potential angel and institutional investors and support them in raising funds through the Incubator's

Investor Network or outside Investors. The selected Startups and Innovators may be allowed to pitch before the investors on a chosen date and venue.

- 8.3. **Mentorship and Guidance.** University will provide necessary mentorship and guidance through the Incubator free of cost. Guidance by Incubator expert mentors, angel investors, clinicians, researchers, experienced & successful senior business and corporate sector executives and industry veterans on a broad range of topics, including but not limited to clinical need identification, gap assessment, validation of the feasibility of the solution, prototyping, product development, market analysis, research and development, clinical validation & clinical trials, Intellectual Property, regulatory, marketing, developing effective business models, processes, etc.
- 8.4. **Special Leaves.** Staff Members and Students are expected to ensure success of their Startups by dedicating efforts and time required. In order to enable this the University has made provisions as detailed in Article 5 and Article 6.
- 8.5. **Training & Development:** The University will organise training events and capacity-building workshops from time to time to help Staff Members and Students tackle the challenges faced during various stages of their journey. The University will invite external subject matter experts such as guest lecturers and alumni for strategic advice and expert guidance. Further, they will be encouraged to attend such as Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDP), Faculty Development Programs (FDP), Conferences, Workshops, Hackathons, Mentoring Sessions, Project Presentations, etc. The Staff Members and Students will be encouraged to enrol in courses on innovation, entrepreneurship management and venture development.
- 8.6. **Travel Allowances & Financial Support:** The University may support the Staff Members and Students in order to attend and participate in various skill development and capacity building activities in the areas of Innovation and Entrepreneurship by providing them with necessary financial assistance and travel allowance as per the norms of the University.
- 8.7. **Awards and Recognition:** The University will recognise the performance of the Staff Members and Students in the areas of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and award the outstanding performers during an annual event on World Entrepreneurs' Day.
- 8.8. **Equity.** The University, either directly or through a designated individual or organisation, may exercise its discretion in taking up equity in the company in the following cases.
 - 8.8.1 Equity against freedom to use University resources including the IP.
 - 8.8.2 Equity against incubation.
 - 8.8.3 Equity against seed grant and/or grant in aid.

For the above sections, the maximum equity University may take up in the company should not exceed 9%. Equity against any loan provided by the University will be independent of this equity limit.

ARTICLE 9 - DISPUTE

- 9.1. **Violation.** Breach of the provisions of this Policy shall be dealt with under the normal procedures of the University, and in accordance with the relevant provisions of laws and regulations in force.
- 9.2. **Dispute Resolution.**
 - 9.2.1. Any internal disputes or questions of interpretation arising under this Policy must in the first instance be referred to IPMC and EPC.
 - 9.2.2. If the matter cannot be resolved by the IPMC and EPC within two months, then the dispute or question of interpretation must be referred to the Vice Chancellor for mediation.
 - 9.2.3. The Vice Chancellor may at their sole discretion refer the matter to University's Executive Committee and/or an independent committee for arbitration as final arbiter of any disputed issues or for final determination.

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