



SYMBIOSIS SKILLS AND PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY

(Recognized by UGC & Established under Govt. of Maharashtra Act. No. XXXVII of 2017)

(Formerly known as Symbiosis Skills and Open University)

Notification No. SSPU/2021/17A, Dated: 19/04/2021

Subject: Approval for Innovation and Startup Policy.

It is hereby notified for information of all concerned that, that the Board of Management in its meeting held on 14th April 2021 has approved the Innovation and Startup Policy.

The Innovation and Startup Policy will be as per Annexure `A` to this Notification.

This notification will come into effect from the date of its issue.

Sd/-

B. B. Patil

Registrar

Copy to

1. E.A to Pro-Chancellor : for information of Pro-Chancellor
2. E.A. to Vice-Chancellor : for information of Vice-Chancellor
3. All School Directors/Program Heads
4. Controller of Examinations
5. Chief Finance and Accounts officer
6. Website

Innovation and Star-up Policy

Preface

To address the need of inculcation of innovation and entrepreneurial culture, Symbiosis Skills and Professional University (SSPU) is releasing an Innovation and Start-up Policy document for all Schools / Programs within the University. The policy is primarily focusing on guiding all Schools / Programs within the SSPU in implementing 'Start-up Action Plan' of Government of India. The policy is formulated in accordance with the guidelines provided by Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India under 'National Innovation and Start-up Policy 2019 for Students and Faculty.' The Innovation and Start-up Policy is deliberating on various facets of nurturing the innovation and Start-up culture at SSPU, which covers Intellectual property ownership, revenue sharing mechanism, norms for technology transfer and commercialization, equity sharing, etc. To facilitate innovation and Start-up, Start-up and Innovation Cell is proposed under the policy and details, including process and practices are shared as below:

1. Start-up and Innovation Cell at SSPU in Brief:

- 1.1 Start-up and Innovation Cell at SSPU facilitates and supports development of entrepreneurial ecosystem among students and faculty.
- 1.2 Start-up and Innovation Cell at SSPU mobilizes resources at University level for pre-incubation, incubation infrastructure and facilities.
- 1.3 Start-up and Innovation Cell at SSPU invests in the entrepreneurial activities as a part of University financial activity. One to five percent of total University annual budget is earmarked for funding and supporting innovation and Start-ups related activities through creation of separate 'Start-up and Innovation Fund'.
- 1.4 Start-up and Innovation Cell facilitates fund raising activity from Industry and Non-Government agencies.
- 1.5 Start-up and Innovation Cell supports raising of fund through sponsorship and donation activities.

2. Purpose of Start-up and Innovation Cell at SSPU

- 2.1 To support faculty, staff and students to participate in innovation and entrepreneurship related activities, thus encouraging students and faculty to consider Start-ups and entrepreneurship as a career option.
- 2.2 To enable creation of a robust innovation and Start-up ecosystem at University level.

3. Types of Project to be Supported

- 3.1 Project with commercial potentials.
- 3.2 Product innovation with significant societal impact.
- 3.3 Technological breakthrough.
- 3.4 Projects with technological objectives.
- 3.5 Projects focused on validating proof-of-concept for a technology idea.
- 3.6 Projects aimed at technology de-risking.
- 3.7 Projects focused on generating and providing the scientific data needed to demonstrate an idea.

What is not supported:

- a) Basic or exploratory projects,
- b) Academic research projects,
- c) Projects involving clinical trials,
- d) Project with late stage validation,
- e) Projects with no plans to convert ideas into saleable products,
- f) Projects with no elementary novelty, and
- g) Projects with serious ethical issues.

4. Project Duration

The funding is provided over a maximum period of 24 months. The project duration can range from 12 months to 24 months. Further extension can be permitted only after critical reviews and based on essentials of the projects.

5. Type of Support to be Provided by Start-up and Innovation Cell of SSPU

- 5.1 Financial Support
 - 5.1.1 Funding support upto 10 lakhs can be offered by Start-up and Innovation Cell of SSPU.
 - 5.1.2 No royalty will be charged for supported funds.
 - 5.1.3 Fund disbursement will be milestone based and is released in 4 instalments.
- 5.2 Mentoring and advisory support shall be provided to the grantee/s, if needed.
- 5.3 Referral support shall be provided to grantee/s, if needed.
- 5.4 Networking opportunities shall be arranged to grantee/s, if needed.
- 5.5 IP related support and services shall be provided to grantee/s, if needed.
- 5.6 Market research and feasibility study support and services shall be provided to grantee/s, if needed.
- 5.7 Research labs/skill centres, as available in the University premises, shall be make available to grantee/s, if needed.
- 5.8 Administrative support shall be provided to grantee/s, if needed.

6. Eligibility Criterion (Who Can Apply?)

6.1 Student/s of SSPU

6.2 Staff (teaching and non-teaching) of SSPU

6.3 Applicant as a Citizen of India (if applicant is formally employed or student of research institute, then the applicant has to produce NO OBJECTION CERTIFICATE stating the organization has policies in place to allow the applicant to accept funding support.

OR

The applicant need to provide an undertaking that he/she plans to terminate his/her association with the current employer/institute.

6.4 The Company registered under the Companies Act 1956.

6.5 Other Eligibility Criterion:

6.5.1 Every proposal must clearly identify a Project Leader who will take responsibility for the technical, managerial, ethical and legal aspects of the project execution.

6.5.2 The Project Leader must be technically qualified to undertake the project, in case he/she is not the students of SSPU.

6.5.3 In the event of approval of the project, Project Leader has to sign project agreement with Start-up and Innovation Cell of SSPU.

6.5.4 An applicant once received support from Start-up and Innovation Cell of SSPU will not eligible for receiving support for funding once again.

6.6 An applicant can set up a new company and transfer the product to newly formed company before commercialization.

6.7 An applicant should offer royalty after commercialization and/or shares of newly formed company to Start-up and Innovation Cell of SSPU as per agreement.

7. Application Process

- Start-up and Innovation Cell of SSPU will issue a call (preferably online) at least twice a year (1st January and 1st August).
- Call for proposals will be opened for one and half month (45 days) from the date of announcement.
- The applicant needs to submit physical applications of proposals for funding. No online/mail applications shall be entertained.
- Applicants are advised to provide detailed information in their applications to allow for an informed and fair review.
- Request for change in the proposal once submitted will not be entertained.
- Providing incorrect information will lead to disqualification of the proposal.

8. Selection Process
8.1 As the first step, proposal will be checked for eligibility and appropriateness as per objectives of Start-up and Innovation Cell of SSPU.
8.2 Subject experts (team of 3\4) will be assigned for reviews for eligible proposals.
8.3 Based on reviews and recommendations, proposals will be shortlisted for further screening by technical experts.
8.4 Technical experts (team of 2\3) will further review, shortlist and recommend the proposals for final presentation.
8.5 Team of experts (subject and technical), member of Start-up and Innovation Cell of SSPU and management of SSPU will take the final decision and selects proposals for further due diligence and funding.
8.6 Due diligence report provided by experts and Start-up and Innovation Cell will be examined by management for final approval of funding and support.

9. Indicative Evaluation Criterion	
Criterion	Weightage %
▪ Technical Feasibility of the Idea/Concept	10%
▪ Novelty	15%
▪ Potential Impact	15%
▪ Commercialization Strategy/Marketing Feasibility	20%
▪ Team/Human Resource	5%
▪ Project Plan	20%
▪ Strategies to Overcome Barriers	5%
▪ Break-even Period	10%

10. Other Conditions
10.1 All grantees are expected to create separate, auditable bank account with Nationalize Bank to receive funds.
10.2 Funds are allowed to use for equipment, manpower, salary, consumables, research supplies, incubation serves, rentals, outsourced services, IP cost and contingency.
10.3 The last instalment (5% of the sanctioned amount) is released only after completion of project and submission of final report.
10.4 Internal audit is performed twice a year for all sanctioned projects.
10.5 Legal, technical, financial and ethical due diligence are carried out for sanctioned projects.
10.6 Due diligence is carried out to confirm how all resources (space, equipment, finance, etc.) tied-up for sanctioned project.
10.7 Due diligence is carried out to confirm management of safety and waste disposal for sanctioned project.

- 10.8 Grantee and Start-up and Innovation Cell of SSPU are together licenced the product to any commercial organization, with grantee having the primary say. Licence fees is either / or mix of upfront fees, royalty, shares.
- 10.9 For Staff of SSPU:
- 10.9.1 Role of faculty is varied from being an owner/ direct promoter, mentor, consultant or as on-board member of the Start-up.
 - 10.9.2 Faculty Start-up is consist of faculty members alone or with students or with faculty of other institutes or with alumni or with other entrepreneurs.
 - 10.9.3 In case the faculty/ staff holds the executive or managerial position for more than three months in a Start-up, they go on sabbatical/ leave without pay/ utilize existing leave.
 - 10.9.4 Faculty clearly separate and distinguish on-going research at the institute from the work conducted at the Start-up/ company.
 - 10.9.5 In case of selection of a faculty Start-up by an outside national or international accelerator through Start-up and Innovation Cell of SSPU, a maximum leave of one semester is permitted.
 - 10.9.6 Faculty must not involve research staff or other staff of institute in activities at the Start-up.
 - 10.9.7 Faculty are allowed to take a semester/year break as sabbatical/ unpaid leave/ casual leave/ earned leave for working on Start-ups and come back.
 - 10.9.8 Not 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.
 - 10.9.9 No restriction on shares that faculty/staff can take, as long as 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.
- 10.10 For Students of SSPU:
- 10.10.1 Students are allowed to use address of SSPU to register their company with due permission from the University.
 - 10.10.2 Students are allowed to access labs/skill centres for mutually accepted time-frame.
 - 10.10.3 Students entrepreneurs are allowed to sit for the examination, even if their attendance is less than the minimum permissible percentage, with due permission from the University.
 - 10.10.4 Students are allowed to take a semester/year break to work on their Start-ups and re-join academics to complete the course.
 - 10.10.5 SSPU has of accommodation facility to the entrepreneurs within the campus for some period of time.
- 10.11 In return of the services and facilities, Start-up and Innovation Cell of SSPU takes 2% to 9.5% equity/stake in the Start-up/company, based on brand used, faculty contribution, support provided and use of University's IPR.
- 10.12 COMMERCIAL success is the ONLY measure in long run.

11. Conflict of Interest

SSPU is keen to encourage its faculty members, students and research scholars to convert their innovations and new ideas into commercial ventures for personal, institutional and social benefits. However, when doing this, complexities surrounding actual and potential conflict of interests are expected to arise, especially in the context of their commitment to SSPU, student education and objective research, as well as their obligations to society. A few situations leading to conflicts of interest are given below. These are not exhaustive and only representative for guidance to all stakeholders.

- All stakeholders may come in possession of proprietary and confidential information. Recipients of such information should make all efforts to preserve the confidentiality of such information and not disclose or use it for their personal and other benefit without explicit approval of the disclosing party.
- Use of SSPU students or employees to perform work for a Start-up without any compensation when the work is not related in any way to their academic pursuits.
- Use of SSPU facilities for the benefit of a Start-up without proper permissions / arrangements.
- Procuring consultancy research assignments and business in the name of SSPU and outsourcing the same to the Start-up.
- Influence policy decisions of SSPU with an intention to benefit a Start-up.
- Influence department decision to procure specific laboratory equipment, which could benefit a Start-up.
- Act in any manner to benefit the Start-up at a disadvantage of SSPU.
- Differential pricing of shares in the same round in a Start-up for faculty members / research scholars / student vis-à-vis SSPU.
- Relationships that might enable SSPU members to influence SSPU's interactions with outside organizations in ways that may lead to personal gain, to the taking of improper advantage by anyone, or the improper diversion of SSPU's assets including the time and talents of its faculty members, staff and researchers.
- Situations where an SSPU member directs students (including post-doctoral fellows, other trainees or guest workers) into a research area or other activity from which the member intends to realize personal financial gain. For example: projects sponsored by a for-profit business in which he/she, a member of his/her family or an associated entity holds an equity or similar ownership interest.
- A conflict may also arise if students are directed to areas of lesser scientific or scholarly merit to enhance the potential for monetary gain or if the financial potential exists only for the SSPU member or the use of students, without recompense from salary or academic credit, for work on behalf of an outside agency.
- Consultation that imposes obligations that conflict with SSPU's IP Policy or with SSPU's obligations to research sponsors.

- Negotiation or influence upon the negotiation of contracts between SSPU and outside organizations with which a SSPU member has consulting or other significant relationships.
- Situations where the member is involved in independent business ventures as owner, operator or major investor, particularly if that entity is doing business with SSPU.

Guidelines for Management of Conflict of Interest

Following guidelines are suggested for SSPU incubates:

- Obtaining appropriate approvals in advance.
- Disclosure of conflict situations.
- Abstain from participating in a decision-making process involving such situations.
- Immediate reporting of the breach of policy.
- Disputes should be reported to the appropriate notified authorities of SSPU.

In situations in which the objectivity of a SSPU member, due to his/her association with a Start-up or company could reasonably be questioned, the Vice Chancellor of SSPU may establish an independent committee to investigate the operation of the Start-up/company and possible conflict of interest between the functioning of the Start-up/company and the responsibilities towards SSPU of the SSPU member associated with the company. The SSPU member may appeal to the Board of Governors of the Institute for a review of the committee’s decisions. The decision of the Board, in this regard, would be final.

In case of a conflict situation, SSPU expects the concerned people to disclose all information regarding the conflict of interest in a transparent manner to the Institute and other relevant stakeholders. The disclosed information will be evaluated for the genuineness of conflicting interests by the relevant committee/stakeholders using appropriate judgment. The committee will discuss and try to resolve disputes over conflict of interest in such cases, and the decision should be duly approved by the competent authority.

12. Policy for Damaged Property

In case of damaged property by Incubatee, the actual market cost will be charged by SSPU or Incubatee may replace the property with the exact match of the property on his/her own.

13. Entry and Exit Agreement

SSPU can allow the Start-up to use its facilities and services for a period of 24 months from the date of formal approval on a selective basis if such extension and support is warranted. The said agreement will be suggested between Start-up and SSPU. Start-up has to exit the SSPU on the completion of the contacted maximum period. SSPU may grant the extended period to Start-up based on the critical approval by Vice Chancellor.

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