

College of Engineering & Management, Kolaghat

Industry Incubation Cell (IIC): Draft Policy

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 In 2016, All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) released a Startup Policy document for AICTE approved institutions, to address the need of inculcation of innovation and entrepreneurial culture in higher education institutions (HEIs). The policy primarily focused on guiding the AICTE approved institutions in implementing 'Startup Action Plan' of Government of India. Further interaction and feedback received from education institutions, the committee constituted by Ministry of Human Resource Development prepared National Innovation and Startup Policy 2019 for Students and Faculty formulating detailed guidelines for various aspects such as nurturing the innovation and Startup culture in HEIs, Intellectual Property ownership, revenue sharing mechanisms, norms for technology transfer and commercialization, equity sharing, etc.
- 1.2 Thus a need is felt by College of Engineering & Management, Kolaghat (CEMK) to develop its own innovation, entrepreneurial and startup policy in pursuance with National Innovation and Startup Policy 2019. Accordingly Industry Incubation Cell (IIC) has been constituted vide college Memo No CEM/D/Memo/3/2020 dated 14 Jan 2020 as amended vide CEM/D/Memo/16/2020 dated 01 Sep 2020. The cell consists of balanced representations from Faculty members, Alumni as well as from the Industry.
- 1.3 The ICC shall develop a ready reckoner of Innovation Tool Kit, which shall be kept on the homepage on institute's website to answer the doubts and queries of the innovators and enlisting the facilities available at the institute.

2. (a) ENTREPRENEURIAL VISION OF THE COLLEGE

Implementing the 'National Innovation and Startup Policy 2019 for Students and Faculty'

(b) ENTREPRENEURIAL MISSION OF THE COLLEGE

- To inculcate the culture of innovation, startup and entrepreneurship among the students and faculty members
- To create innovation pipeline and pathways for entrepreneurs by developing objective . driven ecosystem and associated performance indicators
- To bring in external funding through Govt. and non-Govt. sources and to approach private & corporate sectors to provide fund under CSR

(c) The above Entrepreneurial Vision and Mission are to be read in conjunction with the vision and mission of the college

3. ORGANIZATION OF IIC

- (a) Chairman – A senior Faculty member is to be nominated as Chairman IIC by the Director

(b) Members – There will be a seven member committee in IIC. It is to be ensured that Training & Placement Officer (TPO) of the college is a member of the committee. Other members are to be nominated by the Director in consultation with the Chairman and TPO. These members must consist a balanced representation from the Faculty Members, Alumni and Industry.

4. POLICY OF IIC

IIC will be governed by the policy as under the following heads:

- (a) Creating environment and nurturing startups
- (b) Funding
- (c) Product ownership rights for technologies developed at institute
- (d) Creating innovation pipeline and pathways for entrepreneurs at institute level
- (e) Norms for faculty startups
- (f) Pedagogy and learning interventions for entrepreneurship development
- (g) Collaboration, co-creation, business relationships and knowledge exchange
- (h) Entrepreneurial impact assessment

Each heads are elaborated in the succeeding paragraphs.

5. CREATING ENVIRONMENT AND NURTURING STARTUPS

The aim is to transform a job-seeker to a job-giver by developing an ecosystem for easy creation and nurturing of Startups/enterprises by students, staff (including temporary or project staff), faculty, alumni and potential start up applicants even from outside the college. The college will extend all kinds of technical, infrastructural and financial support for innovation, startups and financial success. For this purpose, the following guidelines are to be implemented:

5.1 Pre-incubation/incubation support through existing Industry Institute Partnership Cell (IIPC), Project/research Labs.

5.2 The above facilities are to be made accessible 24x7 to students, staff and faculty of all disciplines and departments across the college for mutually acceptable time frame.

5.3 Students and faculty members intending to initiate a startup based on the technology developed or co-developed by them or the technology owned by the institute, will be allowed to take a license on the said technology on easy term, either in terms of equity in the venture and/ or license fees and/ or royalty to obviate the early stage financial burden.

5.4 College will allow students/staff to work on their innovative projects and setting up startups (including Social Startups) or work as intern/part-time in startups while studying/working. Student Entrepreneurs may earn credits for working on innovative prototypes/Business Models. Student inventors may also be allowed to opt for startup in place of their mini projects/ major projects, seminars, summer trainings. The area in which student wants to initiate a startup 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.

5.5 Students who are pursuing some entrepreneurial ventures while studying will be allowed to use their address in the institute to register their company with due permission from the institution.

5.6 Students entrepreneurs will be allowed to sit for the examination, even if their attendance is less than the minimum permissible percentage in consultation with MAKAUT.

5.7 College will allow the students to take a semester/year break (or even more depending upon the decision of review committee constituted by the institute) to work on their startups and re-join academics to complete the course in consultation with MAKAUT. Student entrepreneurs may earn MAR/academic credits for their efforts while creating an enterprise on approval of MAKAUT. College will set up a review committee for review of start up by students, and based on the progress made, it may consider giving appropriate credits for MAR/academics.

5.8 College will extend the provision of accommodation to the entrepreneurs within the campus for some period of time.

5.9 On approval of BoG, IIC may allow faculty and staff to take off for a semester/year (or even more depending upon the decision of BoG) as sabbatical/ unpaid leave/casual leave/earned leave for working on startups and come back. College will allow use of its resource to faculty/students/staff wishing 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.

5.10 IIC may facilitate the startup 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:

(a) Short-term/ six-month/ one-year part-time entrepreneurship training.

(b) Mentorship support on regular basis.

(c) 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.

(d) College may also link the startups to other seed-fund providers/ angel funds/ venture funds or itself may set up seed-fund once the incubation activities mature.

5.11 Participation in startup related activities will be considered as a legitimate activity of faculty in addition to teaching, R&D projects, industrial consultancy and management duties and will be considered while evaluating the annual performance of the faculty. Every faculty is encouraged to mentor at least one startup.

5.12 Product development and commercialization as well as participating and nurturing of startups 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.

6. FUNDING

6.1 In return of the services and facilities, institute may take 2% to 9.5% equity/stake in the startup/company, based on brand used, faculty contribution, support provided and use of institute's IPR (Other factors for consideration may be space, infrastructure, mentorship support, seed-funds, support for accounts, legal, patents etc.)

6.2 For staff and faculty, college may take maximum 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.

6.3 A culture shall be promoted to understand that money is not FREE and is risk capital. The entrepreneur must utilize these funds and return. While funding is taking risk on the entrepreneur, it is an obligation of the entrepreneur to make every effort possible to prove that the funding agency did right in funding him/ her.

6.4 No restriction on shares that faculty/staff can take, as long as they do not spend more than 20% of office time on the startup 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 startup, then they will go on sabbatical/leave without pay/earned leave.

6.5 In case of compulsory equity model, startup may be given a cooling period of 3 months to use incubation services on rental basis to take a final decision based on satisfaction of services offered by the institute/incubator. In that case, during the cooling period, college will not force startup to issue equity on the first day of granting incubation support.

6.6 A startup may choose to avail only the support, not seed funding, by the institute on rental basis.

7. PRODUCT OWNERSHIP RIGHTS FOR TECHNOLOGIES DEVELOPED AT THE COLLEGE

7.1 The college would give preference to recruit staff that has a strong innovation and entrepreneurial/industrial experience, behaviour and attitude which will help in fostering I & E culture. Relevant faculty members with prior exposure and interest may be deputed for training to promote I & E. Better engagement of staff in entrepreneurial activities will always be encouraged and will be given importance on career development.

7.2 Inter-departmental linkages would be strengthened through shared faculty, cross-faculty teaching and research in order to gain maximum utilization of internal resources and knowledge.

7.3 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.

7.4 Faculty and staff shall be encouraged to do courses on innovation, entrepreneurship management and venture development.

7.5 In order to attract and retain right people, College shall develop academic and non-academic incentives and reward mechanisms for all staff and stakeholders that actively contribute and support entrepreneurship agenda and activities. The reward system for the staff may include sabbaticals, office and lab space for entrepreneurial activities, reduced teaching loads, awards, trainings, etc. The recognition of the stakeholders may include offering use of facilities and services, strategy for shared risk, as guest teachers, fellowships, associate ships, etc.

8. CREATING INNOVATION PIPELINE AND PATHWAYS FOR ENTREPRENEURS AT COLLEGE LEVEL

8.1 College shall always encourage, mentor, extend technical and infrastructural support to ensure exposure of maximum students to innovation and pre-incubation activities at their early stage and to support the pathway from ideation to innovation to market, mechanisms.

8.2 Spreading awareness among students, faculty and staff about the value of entrepreneurship are to be ensured..

8.3 Students shall 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, Boot-camps, Seminars, Conferences, Exhibitions, mentoring by academic and industry personnel, throwing real life challenges, awards and recognition shall be routinely organized.

8.4 For strengthening the innovation funnel of the institute, access to financing shall be opened for the potential entrepreneurs by providing business incubation facilities, premises at subsidized cost, laboratories, research facilities, IT services, training, mentoring, etc. and shall be accessible to the new startups. Networking events shall be organized to create a platform for the budding entrepreneurs to meet investors and pitch their ideas.

9. NORMS FOR FACULTY STARTUPS

9.1 Role of faculty may vary from being an owner/direct promoter, mentor, consultant or as on-board member of the startup. IIC shall work on developing a policy on 'conflict of interests' to ensure that the regular duties of the faculty don't suffer owing to his/her involvement in the startup activities.

9.2 Faculty startup may consist of faculty members alone or with students or with faculty of other institutes or with alumni or with other entrepreneurs. 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. Faculty must clearly separate and distinguish on-going research at the institute from the work conducted at the startup/ company.

9.3 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.

9.4 Faculty must not accept gifts from the startup.

9.5 Faculty must not involve research staff or other staff of institute in activities at the startup and vice-versa. Human subject related research in startup should get clearance from Director's Council of the college.

10. PEDAGOGY AND LEARNING INTERVENTIONS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT

10.1 Diversified approach shall 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.

- a) Student clubs/ bodies/ departments shall be created to organize Innovation Competitions, Hackathons, Workshops, Boot-camps, Seminars, Conferences, Exhibitions, mentoring by academic and industry personnel, throwing real life challenges, awards etc.
- b) IIC shall start annual 'INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD' to recognize outstanding ideas, successful enterprises and contributors for promoting innovation and enterprises ecosystem within the institute. Innovation champions shall be nominated from within the students/ faculty/ staff for each department/ stream of study.
- c) For creating awareness among the students, the teaching methods shall include case studies on business failure and real-life experience reports by startups.
- d) Our systems are not designed for tolerating and encouraging failure. Failures need to be elaborately discussed and debated to imbibe that failure is a part of life, thus helping in reducing the social stigma associated with it.

10.2 Entrepreneurship education shall be imparted to students at curricular/ co-curricular/ extra-curricular level through elective/ short term or long-term courses on innovation, entrepreneurship and venture development. Validated learning outcomes shall be made available to the students.

10.3 Integration of expertise of the external stakeholders shall be done in the entrepreneurship education to evolve a culture of collaboration and engagement with external environment.

10.4 In the beginning of every academic session, IIC shall 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. Curriculum for the entrepreneurship education shall be continuously updated based on entrepreneurship research outcomes. This shall also be included in case studies on failures.

10.5 Industry linkages shall be leveraged for conducting research and survey on trends in technology, research, innovation, and market intelligence.

10.6 Sensitization of students shall be done for their understanding on expected learning outcomes. Student innovators, startups, experts will be engaged in the dialogue process while developing the strategy so that it becomes need based.

10.7 Customized teaching and training materials shall be developed for startups. The fact is that not everyone can become an entrepreneur. The entrepreneur is a leader, who would convert an innovation successfully into a product; others may join the leader and work for the startup. It is important to understand that entrepreneurship is about risk taking. One must carefully evaluate whether a student is capable and willing to take risk.

10.8 Pedagogical changes are to be made to ensure that maximum number of student projects and innovations are based around real life challenges. Learning interventions developed by the college for inculcating entrepreneurial culture shall be constantly reviewed and updated.

11. COLLABORATION, CO-CREATION, BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

11.1 Stakeholder engagement shall be given prime importance in the entrepreneurial agenda of the institute. IIC shall 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 shall be ensured between institutes such as incubators, science parks, etc.
- b) IIC shall organize networking events for better engagement of collaborators and shall 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 shall be developed by IIC to capitalize on the knowledge gained through these collaborations.
- d) Care shall be taken to ensure that events DON'T BECOME an end goal. First focus of the incubator shall be to create successful ventures.

11.2 IIC shall develop policy and guidelines for forming and managing the relationships with external stakeholders including private industries.

11.3 Knowledge exchange through collaboration and partnership shall be made a part of institutional policy and IIC shall provide support mechanisms and guidance for creating, managing and coordinating these relationships.

- a) Through formal and informal mechanisms such as internships, teaching and research exchange programmes, clubs, social gatherings, etc., faculty, staff and students of the institutes shall be given the opportunities to connect with their external environment.
- b) Connect of the institute with the external environment shall be leveraged in form of absorbing information and experience from the external ecosystem into the institute's environment.
- c) IIC to act as Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for the students, faculty, collaborators, partners and other stakeholders to ensure access to information. Mechanisms shall be devised to ensure maximum exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities with industrial and commercial collaborators.
- d) Knowledge management shall be done by IIC through development of innovation knowledge platform using in-house Information & Communication Technology (ICT) capabilities.

12. ENTREPRENEURIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

12.1 Impact assessment of institute's entrepreneurial initiatives such as pre-incubation, incubation, entrepreneurship education shall be performed regularly using well defined evaluation parameters.

12.2 Monitoring and evaluation of knowledge exchange initiatives, engagement of all departments and faculty in the entrepreneurial teaching and learning shall be assessed.

12.3 Number of startups created, support system provided at the institutional level and satisfaction of participants, new business relationships created by the college shall be recorded and used for impact assessment.

12.4 Impact shall also be measured for the support system provided by the college to the student entrepreneurs, faculty and staff for pre-incubation, incubation, IPR protection, industry linkages, exposure to entrepreneurial ecosystem, etc.

13. CONCLUSION

The policy of IIC primarily focused on guiding the college in implementing 'Startup Action Plan' formulated by AICTE as per guidelines of GoI. This policy needs to be followed by the Students, the Faculty and the Staff Members to nurture innovation and startup culture as the main focus. Subsequently Intellectual Property ownership, revenue sharing mechanisms, norms for technology transfer and commercialization, equity sharing, etc. have also been stressed upon in this policy.

This is the responsibility of IIC to guide the college in conducting various activities related to innovation, startup and entrepreneurship development. Collective and concentrated efforts shall be undertaken to identify, scout, acknowledge, support and reward proven student ideas and innovations and to further facilitate their entrepreneurial journey.