



**Policy Document for the Benue State University Technology Transfer Office (BSUTTO)  
on Award of Start-Ups**

**OPERATION POLICY MAUAL FOR BENUE STATE UNIVERSITY, MAKURDI**

**Prepared in line with  
University Technology Transfer Offcie (BSUTTO) in collaboration with  
Centre for Food Technology and Rsearch (CEFTER);  
Supported by,**

**The Benue State University Governing Council and  
Nigerian Universities Commission**

## **Background of Benue State University and Establishment of Technology Transfer Office**

Benue State University has nine faculties namely, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Social Science, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Environmental sciences, Faculty of Law, Education, Faculty of Management Sciences, and College of Medicine. The university also has Nine Centers/Directorates namely, Directorate of Linkages, Centre for Gender Studies, Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Centre for Research Management, Centre for Distance learning, the University Consultancy, Centre for Food Technology and Research, Centre for Entrepreneurship and Centre for Continuous Education.

The University through the Centre of Entrepreneurship, the University Consultancy and the Centre for Food Technology and research jointly implemented the establishment of the Office of Technology Transfer in the Institution. The objective of the Centre for Entrepreneurship is to build capacity of students, lecturers, entrepreneurs etc. in the Country and the whole of West Africa to be able to harness opportunities and be self-reliant as they become job creators. The University Consultancy has developed a mentoring program for faculty and students on entrepreneurship. It also supports both faculty and students to establish start-ups and manage same. The essence of the mentorship program for entrepreneurs and start up is to provide guidance to faculty and students that need assistance in specific areas. Through this program there are some Business/career development, Entrepreneurship development, award of start-ups grants, financial management and empowerment aimed at self-development with hope of bringing transformation to lives.

The Technology Transfer Office is housed by the Centre for Entrepreneurship studies in the University. The Technology Transfer office support entrepreneurship and innovation activities in the University. The Office reviews existing program to be level specific and specialized, it has (5) University staff allocated to work on TTO related activities within the Centre for Entrepreneurship studies at the University.

The University is currently at the stage of invention/innovation. To strengthen the existing innovation/entrepreneurial ecosystem, the new TTO swiftly embarked on the next phases of Technology transfer activities such as the disclosure evaluation of our products and data, start-ups grants awards, patenting, assessment, patent licensing and commercialization. The TTO included but not limited to scientists, economics, extension services, marketers, ICT, and any marketable research. There were are protection of intellectual property for innovations by the University, hence, licensing of patented intellectual properties. The creation of start-up companies also enhances licensing of these IP to businesses.

## **PART 1: Introduction**

Benue State University, Makurdi (BSU) continue in her quest to achieve her vision and mission of being the best 200<sup>th</sup> University in the world and technological/Innovation driven Institution has established the BSU Technological Transfer and Intellectual Management Office (BSU-TTIPMO).

This is in harmony with the National goal of global transformation via technological and industrial revolution which necessitate the Federal Government of Nigeria to establish the parastatal called the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP) under the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology. This office also serves other functions as facilitating agency in managing and fostering technological transfer, promotion of the nation's indigenous technology, commercialization of these research and development (R&D) results. They as well assist Universities with the processes of products patenting of the original research and innovative activities.

NOTAP in her way to actualized her goals, encourages the establishment of Technology Transfer Offices and Intellectual Property across Nigerian Universities as well as the Research and Development (R&D) Institutions in the country therefore working in collaboration with them and using the institutional offices as her desk offices for transfer of technological innovations.

The Benue State University thereby key into this idea to actualize her mission and vision by establishing her Technology Transfer and Intellectual Property Management Office (TTIPMO) as a unit to operate in conjunction with the Centre for Entrepreneur and Centre for Food Technology and Research (CEFTER) to facilitate awards of start-ups grants, promotion and management of the Institution Intellectual Property Portfolio, patents, designs, copyrights, memorandum of understanding and trademarks etc. for research commercialisations.

University is the birthplace of creations, discoveries, innovations and inventions that positively transform the society and economy around the world. Essentially, teaching and research activities of a University generate Intellectual Property (IP) in the form of teaching materials, research, thesis, software and designs. Also, knowledge, discoveries and technology generated in the University have immense economic and societal benefits if kept confidential and protected within IP rights. It is pertinent to note that research results and findings have always been made public and exploited without the consent or knowledge of their owners which have resulted in IP owners not enjoying the benefits of their hard work as well as the economy not being impacted from huge resources invested in research.

Therefore, the University through the Technology Transfer and Intellectual Property Management Office (TTIPMO) is aimed to create awareness and encourage researchers to disclose their inventions/innovations and apply for start-ups grants awarded by the office. Thereby the TTO facilitates commercialization of Intellectual Property (IP) gathered by research-based results through licensing, patenting, or management of spin-off creations. The Office management and her team carries out the active role in the identification, protection and the commercial exploitation of intellectual property (technology) developed by University researchers through a variety of commercial arrangements including licensing and start-up company creation.

This enhance localization of various Technologies across the science and non-scientific disciplines for easy transfer. This can possibly attract research grants for our teaming

researchers. Therefore, the Technology Transfer Office positions itself as an interface between the University Research Hub and Cognate Industry Partners.

More pointedly, Benue State University need an IP Policy for:

- effective management of IP and knowledge transfer;
- clarity on the ownership of and right to use the IP resulting from the institution's own or collaborative R&D activities;
- setting out the rules of the institution on how to accurately identify, evaluate, protect and manage IP for its further development, usually through some form of commercialization;
- providing a transparent framework for cooperation with third parties and provides guidelines on the sharing of economic benefits arising from the commercialization of IP;
- regulating the ownership and use of IP rights; and
- incentivizing interest in marketable R&D initiatives, creativity and Innovation.

### **Our Vision**

The BSUTTIPMO vision is becoming a leading resourceful University technological transfer manager with a strong proven track record of large, rewarding technological innovations portfolio.

### **Our Mission**

BSUTTIPMO mission is to encourage and promote qualitative innovative research via sensitization, fostering concrete collaboration between our University and industry for the purpose of commercialization, awards of start-ups grant, facilitates patents registration and service acquisition, which will promote robust patent policy that will drive commercialization of products of patents and technological innovations for sound economic benefits.

### **Projects**

#### **What the BSUTTIPMO do;**

As foremost BSUTTIPMO key accountability are as follows:

- ✚ Sensitization of our Researchers on stimulating interest in original research geared towards promoting innovations within the University community
- ✚ Map and link our University innovators/inventors with appropriate Industries, SMEs, and Private sector players for the purpose of mutually rewarding benefits
- ✚ Facilitate the process of patents acquisition on products emanating from the University's original research and creative activities
- ✚ In a similar way we facilitate the acquisition of other Intellectual Property types like trademarks, designs, copyright, memorandum of understanding, etc.
- ✚ Constant evaluation of the commercial viability of patented technology with a view to maximizing potential commercialization revenues while effectively managing the associated intellectual property costs and institutional risks in line with the Intellectual Property Policy of the University
- ✚ Awards of Start-Ups grants to different category of people within the Country and the whole of West Africa

- ✚ Enable and promote research and development (R&D), commercialization of its results and products that originate from the University
- ✚ In summary we serve to midwife a seamless Technology transfer as interface between the University Researchers/innovators to the appropriate development Industry Partners for mutual economic benefit
- ✚ Initiate\implement technology prototype development activities, include the preparation of funding proposals
- ✚ Negotiating inter-institutional (both internal and external) intellectual property agreements

Generally, The BSUTTO collect numerous applications at different stages of processing for patent eligibility and applications. Also, the Office in collaboration with National Office for Technological Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP) enable and enhance easy processing of these patents and other Intellectual property at the Patent Registry.

## **PART 2: AWARDS OF START-UPS GRANTS**

### **BACKGROUND**

The Office of the Benue State University Technology Transfer in collaboration with Center for Food and Technology research is also responsible in advertising, managing and awarding of start-up grants to different category of people within Nigeria and the whole of West Africa since its establishment in January, 2023. It provides robust grants scheme for meritorious students, members of the community, people within the Country and the whole of West Africa.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objective of the scheme is to award start-ups to meritorious students, lecturers and populace belonging to economically weaker sections of minority communities so as to provide them better opportunities for higher entrepreneurship, increase their rate of attainment in higher productivity and enhance their employability and business enterprises.

### **SCOPE**

The grant is to be awarded for people (entrepreneurs, innovators and enthusiasts across Nigeria and West African region) with business abilities, entrepreneur skills and those willing to develop their knowledge of entrepreneurship but due to lack of funds have not been able to actualize their dreams. Those that accept to enhance their entrepreneurship abilities through different stages of incubations after obtaining the awards. It also covers technical and vocational courses in Industrial and Vocational Training courses of less than one-year duration under this scheme; although certificate courses are not covered,

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Start-up grants will be awarded to the students who have excellent ideals on entrepreneurship and scores not less than 50% marks or equivalent grade, demonstrate higher productivity of business ideals and pitching. Those with track records of business enterprises having a formidable team network and are ready to expand their ideal/business but due to financial impediment are unable to do so. It also encourages team work.

### **DISTRIBUTION**

The distribution of the start-up grants includes all races, religion and sex etc. irrespective of Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jain and Zoroastrians (Parsis) but more concentration is given to the low income populace within the region. Therefore, females are highly encouraged to apply as equal opportunity will be given to them. The distribution of grant among the States/regions will be made on the basis of population of low income within the region.

#### **EARNMARKING**

The earmarking 40% start-up grant is earmarked for females within the regions which is transferable to male populace of that region in case of non-availability of female populace in that community or region who has participated and performed meritoriously. If the physical target of grants for some particular low income in the country/Region is not utilized; it will be distributed among the same populace in the States/Regions strictly in accordance with merit and without disturbing the national ratio.

**Renewal \*** There is no merit list generation for renewal cases. Renewal applicant will get the grant if one is doing excellent in his or her previous earns and there is need for enlargement after applicant is verified by all authorities (BSUTTO Coordinating Unit)

#### **RATES OF START-UPS GRANT**

Actual financial assistance will be provided for purchase of equipment, raw materials and maintenance allowances as regards to entrepreneurship/business expansion. The awardees can also be aided in constructing a cottage business house if the Authorities see the genuine need for such.

#### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

1. Strategic fit: Illustrate how your innovation idea aligns with University's strategic direction, vision and mission.
2. Potential resource requirements: Explain the availability of the resources (potential and actual) required to execute the innovation idea and the local content
3. Desirability: Describe the market (potential or actual) for the innovation idea
4. Feasibility: Catalogue the technologies and capabilities you have or is needed to implement the innovation idea and their availability and accessibility
5. Cash flow: Set out the commercial case for the innovative idea. How long will it take to achieve break-even and achieve profitability? provide a cash flow statement if available.
6. Originality: Is the innovation idea original or an improvement over an existing concept? please elucidate in detail.
7. Investment vs Impact: Detail the potential impact vis a vis the costs to implement the innovation idea
8. Simplicity of design concept: Describe the ease or difficult to implement innovation idea
9. Market access: What percentage of the population will have access to the innovation idea? describe the marketing approach to access the market with your innovation idea.
10. Environmental impact: Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been performed for the innovation idea? provide a report if any
11. Sustainability: Describe the future benefits of the innovation idea and the positive changes it will bring to the food and agricultural sector
12. Culture: Narrate the cultural impact of the innovation idea and how it affects the way of life of the people.

13. Risk Management: Discuss the envisaged risks to the design, development, delivery and implementation of innovation idea and the mitigation factors to manage the risks.

#### **Location/House Accommodation of BSU-TTIPMO**

The TTO is housed at the Centre for Entrepreneurship Studies of the University and the Office works closely with the Benue State University, Makurdi Centre for Food Technology and Research (CEFTER), African Centre of Excellence Impact Team.

#### **Management/Leadership Positions of the TTO**

The Technology Transfer Management is a broad title covering the complete “how-to” of overseeing ideas move from an academic setting to a commercial or industrial environment. The following Staff has been actively involved in actualizing the smooth technology transfer.

#### **Staff of the BSUTTO**

**Technology Transfer Officer** (manage the general working of the TTO)

**Patent Applicator** (In charge of Research contract, Licensing and Intellectual Property services)

**ICT Staff** (coordinate facilities for online trainings, meetings and presentations)

**Office Secretary** (Assist with office works and serves as Industrial liason assisting officer)

**Clerical officer/cleaner** (help move files and assist in keeping the offices clean)

#### **Definition of Terms**

“**Benefits**” means the contribution to the advantages of the socio-economic needs of Nigeria or the university concerned in the area of specialty of the University and may include, capacity development, technology transfer, job creation, enterprise development, social upliftment and products, or processes or services that embody or use the Intellectual Property;

“**Commercialisation**” which means the process by which any Intellectual Property emanating from research developed by the University or institution’s Employees, Students and Visitors is or may be adapted or used for any purpose that may provide any Benefit;

#### **Alternate**

“**Commercialization**” means any form of utilisation of IP intended to generate value, which may be in the form of a marketable product, process or service, commercial returns, or other benefit to society. **Commercialize** is similarly defined.

“**Intellectual Property**” (IP) means all outputs of creative endeavour in any field that can be protected either statutorily or not, within any jurisdiction, including but not limited to all forms of copyright (and similar rights that may subsist in works or other subject matter), design right (whether registered or unregistered), patent (patentable materials, and patent applications), trademarks (registered or unregistered trademarks and business names), know-how, trade secrets, rights in databases, information, data, discoveries, mathematical formulae, specifications, diagrams, expertise, techniques, research results, inventions, computer software

and programs, algorithms, laboratory notebooks, business and research methods, actual and potential teaching and distance learning materials, University or Institution's name, badge and other trademarks associated with the operations of the University, Tangible Research Property, and such other items as the University or Institution may from time to time specify in writing or other rights as defined by Article 2 of the Convention of July 1967 establishing the World Intellectual Property Organisation or as provided by Article 22 of the TRIPS Agreement as may exist anywhere in the world;

**“Intellectual Property Disclosure Form”** means the form which needs to be completed by a Creator(s) to document their invention and provide key information regarding the Creator(s), funding used to develop the IP and the rights of third parties, for submission to the University or Institution for assessment of the Intellectual Property;

**“Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)”** The proprietary rights that may be granted for an invention, mark, design, plant variety, copyright or other type of IP, should the statutory requirements for protection be met to result in a patent, trade mark, registered design, plant breeders' right, or copyright respectively.

**“Invention”** includes any discovery, invention or other development of a technical nature, whether or not patentable;

#### **Alternate**

**“Invention”** means the intellectual property right described and protected in terms of the Patent and Designs Act, Cap P2, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004.

**“IP”** means Intellectual Property

**“IP Expenses”** means those expenses assignable to the management of the University or Institution's Intellectual Property including costs for achieving and maintaining patent or other Intellectual Property protection, financing costs, loans, marketing, licensing and other legal actions related to the enforcement of Intellectual Property and contract rights, which does not include staff time or general administrative expenses;

**“Patent”** means the intellectual property right described and protected in terms of the Patent and Designs Act, Cap P2, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004.

**“Patentable Invention”** means Intellectual Property that involves an inventive step and in terms of a patent Act, is deemed to be patentable and is regarded as novel (i.e., that has not been Publicly Disclosed), inventive (not obvious to a person skilled in the technical discipline) and useful (can be applied in trade or industry or agriculture) or improvements upon a patented invention;

**“Public Domain”** connotes works that are not covered by Intellectual property rights at all, either because the rights have expired or been forfeited; and as such are held by the public at large and are available for anybody to use freely and without reference to the original creator or permission from the creator/owner of the work by a third party;



**“Research”** means any creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications. It comprises three activities: basic research, applied research and experimental development.

**“Trademark means”** means the intellectual property right described and protected in terms of the Trade Marks Act, Cap T13, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004

**“Trade Secrets”** means manufacturing, industrial and commercial secrets, which includes sales methods, distribution methods, consumer profiles, advertising strategies, lists of suppliers and clients, and manufacturing processes.

**“University”** means all federal, state and private institutions licensed/approved by the National Universities Commission to operate as such.

**“University IP”** means IP owned or co-owned by the University.

#### **ARTICLE -AMENDMENT**

The Start-ups grant Policy document shall be subject to review every 5years or whenever the need arises.

**[END OF DOCUMENT]**

#### **CONNECT US@**

**Dr. Sylvester J. Gemanam**

**Coordinator, BSUTTO**

Office of the Coordinator,

Benue State University, PMB 102119,

Makurdi.

**Phone:** +2348067988338

**Email:** bsutto@bsum.edu.ng