



MUAST

MARONDERA UNIVERSITY
OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

INNOVATION AND INCUBATION POLICY

TITLE	MARONDERA UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY
POLICY NUMBER	
COMPILED BY	ACTING DIRECTOR INNOVATION
APPROVED BY	MUAST SENATE
DATE	

JW

PREAMBLE

Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (MUASt) is a modern and unique institution of higher learning established through an Act (Chapter 25:29, 2015). The University is driven by the vision “to be a leading global centre of excellence in the provision of technology-driven sustainable green agricultural solutions”. Underpinned by its unique CORE VALUES: Excellence, Diversity, Innovation, Ethics, Sustainability, Ubuntu, and Integrity; the University aims at producing globally acceptable and competent graduates grounded in agricultural, entrepreneurial, and technological skills through excellence in teaching, research and extension services, innovation, and industrialization.

Innovation is one of the five pillars of the university in line with Education 5.0. The vision of the MUASt Innovation Unit is to cultivate critical thinking, invent innovations, and encourage entrepreneurship for the creation of wealth. This requires the integration of innovation in MUASt business and an attitudinal shift in both students and staff. The Innovation unit shall look out for potential innovations and other parties to cooperate with and incubate projects and innovations until they are commercialized. This Innovation policy encourages every stakeholder to research, innovate, and enter entrepreneurship with as much support as possible.

JN

Contents

Definition of terms	4
CHAPTER ONE	5
1.1 Purpose	5
1.2 Scope of the policy	5
1.3 Regulatory frameworks	5
1.4 Objectives of the Policy	5
CHAPTER TWO: Policy Elements	5
2.1 Strategies and Governance	5
2.2 Project incubation	6
2.3 Intellectual Property Rights	6
2.4 Recognition and Rewards	6
2.5 Ethical Considerations	7
CHAPTER THREE	7
3.1 Compliance with University Policy	7
3.1 Monitoring and Review of the Policy	7

JN

Definition of terms

Innovation- An innovation is a new idea, method, product, or process that brings about positive change and improvement in a particular field. An innovation addresses existing problems and ultimately leads to increased efficiency, competitiveness, and value creation.

Incubation- Process of nurturing and developing a new idea, product, or concept to bring it to market or implement it successfully. The incubation process involves research, testing prototypes, getting market feedback, refining the concept, and creating an implementation plan.

Start-up - A newly established business or company that is in the early stages of development and growth founded by entrepreneurs who have identified a unique business opportunity and are working to bring the idea to market. Startups usually have limited resources but have the potential for rapid growth and success if the business plan is effectively executed.

Commercialization- The process of bringing a new product or service to market for sale and distribution to consumers.

Industrialization- The establishment of factories, mass production techniques, and mechanization of production processes. Industrialization leads to increased efficiency, productivity, and economic growth.

DN

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 This innovation and incubation policy explains how Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (MUASt) will manage innovations until they are commercialised. This policy also outlines how incubates will be considered.

1.2 Scope of the policy

1.2.1 This policy applies to all innovators who may be MUASt staff or students and outsiders who wish to have their innovations incubated at MUASt and form collaborations with the university.

1.3 Regulatory frameworks

1.3.1 This policy derives its mandate from the MUASt Strategic Plan, the Innovation and Industrialization Ordinance, the Research and Ethics policy, the Intellectual Property Policy, and the Revenue Sharing Policy.

1.4 Objectives of the Policy

1.4.1 To motivate students and staff to develop innovations that address national challenges.

1.4.2 To empower and facilitate the incubates, startups, and first-generation businesses.

1.4.3 To promote the integration of innovation and entrepreneurship into the MUASt curriculum in line with education 5.0.

CHAPTER TWO: Policy Elements

2.1 Strategies and Governance

2.1.1 The Innovation unit is headed by a director who reports to the Vice-Chancellor and is accountable to the Executive Director for the Centre of Innovation and Industrialization.

2.1.2 The unit covers innovation, business development, and intellectual property protection.

2.1.3 The Innovation Unit coordinates all innovations in the university; hence, the director liaises with deans and department heads.

2.1.4 The Innovation Unit shall facilitate the use of resources provided by the university for innovation projects and assist in the smooth implementation of such projects by helping in solving challenges and evading brick walls such projects may face.

2.1.5 The Innovation Unit shall promote and support the formation of student innovation clubs through conduits such as incessant and effective interaction with the industry.

2.2 Project incubation

- 2.2.1 The Innovation Unit will provide incubation facilities for projects initiated by MUASt staff, students, and external members.
- 2.2.2 A preincubate who wishes to work on an innovative idea, business plan, or prototype shall apply to be engaged as an intern who will get benefits as stipulated and determined by the University Council from time to time. Application reviews shall be done at the beginning of each semester.
- 2.2.3 The review committee shall assess applications based on commercial feasibility, patent search, and analysis reports.
- 2.2.4 The University shall allocate a project lead with relevant expertise to assist the individual innovators.
- 2.2.5 In addition, the University shall provide further support in form of workspace and expertise in areas such as ideation, prototyping, and market research depending on the project stage.
- 2.2.6 Funding will only be provided for selected projects and is subject to availability.
- 2.2.7 The University shall provide training through workshops, and mentorship programs to enhance entrepreneurial skills and knowledge of incubates.
- 2.2.8 The Innovation Unit shall promote partnerships that facilitate knowledge transfer, technology transfer, and commercialization opportunities for the benefit of incubates.
- 2.2.9 A project shall be incubated for up to two years until it is commercialized. This will however depend on the size of the project and resource availability.
- 2.2.10 Progress will be monitored by a review committee that shall comprise a dean of the relevant faculty, a domain expert, and two other members as selected by the university.

2.3 Intellectual Property Rights

- 2.3.1 Intellectual property rights of inventions will be as stipulated in MUASt IP policy. Generally, the IP rights shall be owned by the inventor.
- 2.3.2 However, if MUASt resources are used, the IP rights shall be jointly owned by the inventor and the university as stipulated in the MUASt IP policy.
- 2.3.3 If inventors wish to incubate a company, the company must annex its name 'MUASt Incubated.'

2.4 Recognition and Rewards

- 2.4.1 Financial rewards from innovations shall be shared according to the MUASt Revenue Sharing Policy.
- 2.4.2 Other rewards and benefits may be in the form of awards from innovation competitions conducted by the Innovation Unit.

2.4.2 Other rewards and benefits may be in the form of awards from innovation competitions conducted by the Innovation Unit.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

All innovation projects should meet the requirements of the MUAST Research and Ethics policy.


CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Compliance with University Policy

Failure to comply with the policy is an act of misconduct subject to disciplinary action.

3.1 Monitoring and Review of the Policy

Policies are subject to review after every 4 years.

Approved.....
(Vice Chancellor)

Date...31/10/2024.....

