



SSN College of Engineering
(An Autonomous Institution Affiliated to Anna University, Chennai)
Kalavakkam, Chennai – 603110.



**SSN Innovation and Start-up Policy (SSN - ISP)
– 2021**

Approved by,

Principal

1. Preamble

The staff of SSN Institutions generate knowledge and are continuously engaged in dissemination. The Institute 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. The Institute 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 incentivises, encourages, and fosters entrepreneurship by its staff and members.

With this policy, the Institute aims to:

- a. **Promote Entrepreneurship:** This innovation & start-up policy intends to create & foster an entrepreneurial ecosystem which encourages co-creation by involving students, faculty, and professionals from multiple disciplines through the guiding principles in this document. This innovation & startup policy also seeks to provide a framework for the involvement of the Institute's staff and students in commercialising Institutes' research into products, services, and processes.
- b. **Offer Entrepreneurship guidance:** The Institute has established a Technology Business Incubator on the campus to provide the entrepreneurs with the necessary guidance, mentorship, and infrastructure support.
- c. **Ensure Balance of interests:** This innovation & startup policy also seeks to reiterate that the staff's primary commitment of time and intellectual contributions should be to the education, research and other obligations of the Institute and they have a primary professional obligation to act in the best interests of the Institute. 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 alumni of the Institute.

This policy is subject to periodical review and amendments. SSN Institutions reserves the right to make an exception of all or any of the terms of this policy on a case-to-case basis, as deemed necessary and required.

2. Definitions

- 1) **Government** means the Central Government of India & the State Government of Tamil Nadu, as applicable to/in the context(s).
- 2) **“SSN” or “Institute”** shall mean “SSN Institutions” including its parent & sister concerns.
- 3) **“Policy”** means SSN Innovation & Startup Policy.
- 4) **“Faculty Member”** shall mean a faculty member of SSN Institutions.
- 5) **“Student”** shall mean a full-time student studying at SSN Institutions.

- 6) “SSN Member” shall mean any permanent faculty member on duty or leave, faculty on tenure, research associates, post-doctoral fellows and students having live registration and alumni.
- 7) “Startup/Venture/Company” is an entity that develops a business model based on either product innovation or service innovation and makes it scalable, replicable, and self-reliant as defined in Gazette Notification No. G.S.R. 127(E) dated February 19, 2019, or as per the prevailing notifications of the Government of India issued from time to time. The current definition of a start-up is an entity that is headquartered in India, was incorporated less than 10 years ago, and has an annual turnover of less than Rs. 100 crores.
- 8) “Promoter” means a promoter as defined under the Companies Act 2013, subject to the extant rules and other notifications as published from time to time by the Government of India.
- 9) “Executive capacity” shall mean a role of Director or Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer or Manager or any person, enjoying a similar role, by whatever name called, in the Company.
- 10) “Equity share” also commonly referred to as ordinary share, represents the form of fractional or part ownership in which a shareholder, as a fractional owner, undertakes the maximum entrepreneurial risk associated with a business venture.
- 11) “Knowledge-base” means all inventions/innovations (whether eligible for a patent or not) invention/innovation disclosures, trade secrets, know-how, proprietary information, technical data, documentation, data collections, databases, concepts, processes, software, designs drawings, materials, support services and the like, whether the foregoing are in tangible or intangible form.
- 12) “Incubator” shall mean SSN Incubation Foundation
- 13) “Incubation” shall mean a start-up company (as defined in this policy), to use seed fund and/or research grant and/or office space at the Incubator.
- 14) “Intellectual Property (IP)” shall mean all outputs of creative endeavour in any field at SSN for which legal rights may be obtained or enforced under 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, 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.

3. Vision

To be a sought-after centre for Start-up aspirants, specifically from the Academic community.

4. Mission

- 1) To create awareness amongst the students about the possibilities of “job creation” through entrepreneurship
- 2) To create awareness about the creation of pre-incubation and incubation facilities for nurturing innovations and start-ups in the Institute
- 3) To motivate students to undertake Incubation and Innovation on the campus so that it can be interlinked with Entrepreneurial activity without which enterprises are unlikely to succeed
- 4) To create a network with stakeholders like Angel Investors, Venture Capitalists, industries etc
- 5) To maximise industry engagement inside the Institute
- 6) To provide adequate training and mentorship to students and faculty to promote start-up culture at SSN

Objectives:

1. To motivate students, faculty, and alumni to convert their ideas/ innovations into commercially viable product/process as per SSN CE-ISP policy.
2. To support students, faculty and alumni and promote technology-driven start-ups based on the local resources available for creating employment opportunities and percolating the same for a large the number of rural communities.
3. To provide sufficient infrastructure facilities for accommodating new start-ups with technical support, mentoring, seed fund for early-stage start-ups, development fund for commercialisation, IP protection, technology transfer, and commercialisation.
4. To promote Industry-Institute collaborative student ventures within the institute to promote Industry-driven marketable products and services.
5. To develop self-sustainable campus start-up models in various disciplines of engineering and technology.

5. Governance

The implementation of the policy and other related activities for the implementation of the policy would be through a committee comprising of the following members:

- 1) Management Head
- 2) Principal
- 3) Incubation Head
- 4) Incubation Coordinator
- 5) Industry / Entrepreneur
- 6) Senior Faculty from the likes of IIT
- 7) Other eminent & subject experts

The ultimate decision-making authority in the case of the determination of the permission to staff and student-led start-ups is the President, SSN Institutions.

6. Operating Rules & Regulations

6.1 Eligibility

- 1) UG, PG, JRF & PDF Students
- 2) Project staff
- 3) Alumni
- 4) Faculty and staff (current and retired) including adjunct faculty

6.2 Types of companies

SSN aims to promote the following types of companies, aimed at setting up a technology business enterprise.

Type	Requirement	Aim	Technology Readiness Level
Technology Development	Basic idea	converting a project idea into a product	TRL 3
Technology Demonstration	Proof of concept/patent applied	Demonstrating the product on two or three customer ends.	TRL 5
Market development	Certification of product utility from at least two customers	To establish the capacity to scale up and to establish a market for the product.	TRL 6

In all these cases, support by a technology promotion agency (government or non-government) will be an added advantage.

Ideas based on IT, not involving any physical product development, may also be considered.

All the applicants under any of the above categories are evaluated by the respective evaluation committee for permission.

6.3 Faculty Startup Framework

- 1) The faculty member must take prior permission from the Institute before associating with any business venture or starting a new venture.
- 2) It is expected that the faculty member would be a Promoter of such Companies and/or a Director on its Board. In addition, the faculty member can choose one of the following options:
 - a) Provide consultancy to the Company in a non-executive capacity while being a full-time member of SSN. Eligibility and approvals of such leave are governed by the extant rules of the Institute.
 - b) Undertake projects that could be executed at the Institute and manage through the Company. However, this may be undertaken only after obtaining explicit permission from the competent authority of the Institute and entering into an explicit agreement with the Institute following existing processes.
- 3) Faculty/ staff are allowed to use institute infrastructure and facilities, as per the choice of the potential entrepreneur based on availability and following the lab norms.
- 4) As per AICTE guidelines, Part-time/full-time MS/MBA/PGDM (Innovation, entrepreneurship, and venture development) programs are encouraged where one can get a degree while incubating and nurturing a startup company.
- 5) Institute intends to support its members with infrastructure, mentorship support, seed funds, support for accounts, legal, patents etc.
- 6) Participation in start-up-related activities is considered an authentic activity of faculty in addition to teaching, R&D projects, and industrial consultancy and management duties. This will be considered and will be given appropriate weightage while evaluating the performance of the faculty.
- 7) Faculty may be encouraged to mentor student start-ups in which, they can also become a partner of the student Entrepreneurial activity with mutual agreement.
- 8) Developing a product and making it available in the commercial market will attract suitable incentives to the faculty/staff.
- 9) Award will be given to the best startup inside the campus.

- 10) Faculty will be encouraged to tie up with the industry of their choice on approval from the committee.
- 11) Faculty members must separate and distinguish ongoing research at the institute from the work conducted at the startup/ company.
- 12) 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.
- 13) Faculty must not accept gifts from the startup.
- 14) Faculty must not involve research staff or other staff of the institute in activities at the startup and vice-versa.
- 15) Human subject-related research in a start-up should get clearance from the ethics committee of our institution.

6.4 Student Startup Framework

- 1) Students who are under incubation, and pursuing some entrepreneurial ventures while studying are allowed to use the Institute address to register their company with due permission.
- 2) Student entrepreneurs who fall short of attendance due to their involvement in entrepreneurial activity may be permitted to sit for the examination, by providing proof of work. In such cases, prior permission from HoD, CoE and Principal must be sought, as per Regulations, prevalent then.
- 3) Provision of accommodation to the student entrepreneurs within the campus for some time will be provided, subject to availability.
- 4) Students will be allowed to attend training / Mentoring activities across India to enhance their skills.
- 5) Institute intends to support its members with infrastructure, mentorship support, seed funds, support for accounts, legal, patents etc.

7. Mentoring for Students and Faculty

- 1) Mentoring and relevant services can be offered for the students either in return for fees, equity sharing or on zero payment bases.
- 2) The mentoring facilities are provided exclusively by our team of faculty members and industrial partners through the innovation council.
- 3) The mentors help the students to focus on emerging innovative technologies and identify potential problems from diverse industry verticals, and to get hands-on experience in industries if needed. Eventually, it helps them to innovate, incubate and evolve their ideas into a start-up.
- 4) The panel of industry members guides incubatees in shaping up new ventures.

8. Industry Involvement

- 1) SSN already promotes institutional preparation for meeting industrial needs by facilitating sponsored R&D projects for faculty and students.
- 2) SSN encourages seminars, workshops, and various other industrial training programs.
- 3) Industry Institute partnerships reflect in equipping faculty with the latest practices and make the students industry-ready by providing exposure to current industry practices and honing their skills to adapt to changing technologies.
- 4) The primary focus is to interact with elite industries in and around Chennai and extend the efforts to establish a partnership with industries across the globe shortly.

9. Usage of Institute Resources & Intellectual Property

- 1) SSN will extend its resources and facilities like laboratories, to the incubates for testing and product development purposes, at pre-agreed rates. This includes rent for space.
- 2) SSN is actively involved in creating an intellectual property as part of academic activity which is owned by members – as inventors – and the Institute if the Institutes' resources are utilised as a part of the essential requirement to undertake a particular research/activity.
- 3) If the intellectual property is developed by members not using any institute facilities, outside office hours or not as a part of the curriculum by a student, then the IPR will be entirely owned by said members in proportion to the contributions made by them. In this case, the members can decide to license the technology to third parties or use the technology the way they deem fit.
- 4) If there is a dispute in ownership, a minimum five-member committee consisting of two faculty members, two of the institute's alumni/ industry experts and one legal advisor with experience in intellectual property will examine the issue after meeting the members and help them settle this, hopefully to everybody's satisfaction.
- 5) In case of the institution pays for patent filing, a committee can examine whether the IPR is worth patenting. If inventors are using their funds or non-institute funds, then they alone have a say in patenting.
- 6) SSN is encouraging to concentrate on interdisciplinary research and publication for a start-up.
- 7) Proposals for Government and Non-Government funds for research activities, and seed money funds are to be actively applied by the faculty members of the Institution.
- 8) SSN may provide funding support The University may provide funding support to the companies in the form of grants in aid, seed grant and loan.

Equity in the supported companies may be taken up as per approved Regulations.

10. Equity Allocations

- 1) The Institute, either directly or through a designated individual or organisation, may exercise its discretion in taking up equity in the company in the following cases.
 - a) Equity against freedom to use Institute resources including the IP
 - b) Equity against incubation.
 - c) Equity against seed grant and/or grant in aid.
 - d) Equity against loan provided by the University.
- 2) In return for the services and facilities, the Institution may take 2% to 9.5% equity in the startup (a limit of 9.5% is suggested so that institute has no legal liability arising out of the start-up).
- 3) Equity against any loan/seed fund/grant-in-aid provided by the Institute will be independent of this equity limit.

11. Impact Assessment

Impact assessment for pre-incubation, incubation and entrepreneurship development will be formulated with well-defined parameters. The information on the impact of the activities shall be actively used while developing and reviewing the entrepreneurial strategy. The end impact score will be based on the **Commercial Success** of the Product that comes out of the Entrepreneurial / Startup activity.

12. Resolution of Disputes

In situations in which the objectivity of a faculty member – due to his/her association with the Company - could reasonably be questioned, the Institute may establish an independent committee to investigate the operation of the Company and the conflict of interest between the functioning of the Company and the academic duties of the faculty member(s) associated with the Company.

The faculty may appeal to the President of the Institute for a review of the committee decisions. The decision of the President, in this regard, would be final.

SRI SIVASUBRAMANIYA NADAR COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

(An Autonomous Institution)

Approved by AICTE, New Delhi and Affiliated to Anna University

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Date: 07.02.2022

Approval of National Innovation & Start-up Policy (NISP) for Implementation at SSN College of Engineering

In reference to the above-stated subject, a series of meetings of the NISP Committee were held on 15.02.2021, 03.06.2021, and 31.01.2021 regarding the formulation of national innovation & Start-up Policy (NISP) at the College level. After due deliberations and modifications, the draft National Innovation & Start-up Policy (NISP) is hereby approved for implementation at the college level. All the stakeholders are directed to go through the contents of the same and start organising workshops cum awareness programmes about the NISP Policy.



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