D Y PATIL INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY,
AKURDI, PUNE

START-UP AND INNOVATION POLICY

Contents

BEERAN MOIDIN BADRUDDIN MOHAMMED

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D Y Patil International University Start-up and Innovation Policy

1. Preamble

The **D Y Patil International University Start-up and Innovation Policy** aims to establish a vibrant ecosystem that fosters innovation, entrepreneurship, startup creation, translational research, technology transfer, commercialization of research outcomes, and self-employment among students, faculty members, researchers, staff, and alumni. The policy is aligned with national initiatives such as **Startup India**, the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, the **AICTE National Innovation and Startup Policy (NISP)**, and other relevant Government of India initiatives. It seeks to transform innovative ideas into sustainable businesses that contribute to economic growth, employment generation, and societal development.

2. Vision

To develop a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem that transforms innovative ideas and research outcomes into successful startups, technology-based enterprises, and sustainable businesses, thereby contributing to economic growth, employment generation, and societal development.

3. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Foster innovation and entrepreneurship among students, faculty members, researchers, staff, and alumni.
- Encourage the establishment of technology-based and knowledge-driven startups.
- Promote translational research and commercialization of research outcomes.
- Strengthen industry–academia collaboration through joint research and innovation.
- Facilitate intellectual property creation, patent filing, technology transfer, and licensing.
- Provide mentoring, incubation, financial assistance, and infrastructure support to innovators.
- Encourage interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary innovation projects.
- Generate employment opportunities and promote self-employment through entrepreneurship.

4. Scope

This policy shall apply to:

- Undergraduate Students
- Postgraduate Students
- Research Scholars
- Faculty Members
- Staff Members
- Alumni
- University-recognized Startup Teams and Innovators

5. Definitions

Start-up

A startup is an entity engaged in the innovation, development, deployment, commercialization, or improvement of products, processes, services, or technology-driven solutions with the potential for scalable business growth and societal impact.

Innovation

Innovation refers to the creation or significant improvement of a product, process, technology, service, or business model that provides social, economic, or commercial value.

Incubation

Incubation is the structured support provided to startups through mentoring, infrastructure, networking, technical assistance, business advisory services, and access to funding for transforming innovative ideas into sustainable enterprises.

6. Institutional Start-up Governance

6.1 Start-up and Innovation Council (SIC)

The **Start-up and Innovation Council (SIC)** shall serve as the apex policy-making, advisory, and monitoring body of the University for promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, startup development, translational research, technology transfer, and commercialization.

The Council shall formulate policies, provide strategic direction, facilitate institutional support, monitor startup activities, and evaluate the overall performance of the University's innovation ecosystem.

6.2 Composition of the Start-up and Innovation Council

The Council shall comprise:

- Vice-Chancellor/Director – Chairperson
- Dean, Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Dean, Research and Development
- Industry Experts
- Startup Founders and Entrepreneurs
- Faculty Representatives
- Intellectual Property (IPR) Expert
- Finance/Legal Expert (Nominee)
- Member Secretary (Nominated by the University)

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6.3 Functions of the Council

The Council shall:

- Formulate, review, and periodically revise the University's Start-up and Innovation Policy.
- Develop strategic plans and institutional guidelines for promoting innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Promote innovation, design thinking, entrepreneurship, and startup culture across the University.
- Organize ideathon, startup competitions, innovation challenges, exhibitions, entrepreneurship awareness programmes, and boot camps.
- Evaluate and approve startup proposals submitted by students, faculty members, researchers, and alumni.
- Recommend deserving startups for incubation, mentoring, and financial assistance.
- Promote translational research, prototype development, proof-of-concept validation, technology transfer, and commercialization.
- Facilitate seed funding, prototype development grants, startup funding, CSR support, angel investment, and venture capital opportunities.
- Promote collaborations with industries, research organizations, incubators, accelerators, government agencies, and international institutions.
- Monitor startup performance, funding utilization, commercialization outcomes, and institutional Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Ensure transparency, accountability, ethical practices, and compliance with applicable statutory regulations.

7. Startup Support Ecosystem

To strengthen the University's innovation ecosystem, the University shall establish the following support mechanisms.

7.1 Innovation and Entrepreneurship Cell

The Innovation and Entrepreneurship Cell shall:

- Conduct awareness programmes on innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Organize innovation challenges, startup competitions, hackathons, and entrepreneurship development programmes.
- Support idea generation, idea validation, and business model development.
- Facilitate mentoring and networking with industry experts and successful entrepreneurs.
- Encourage participation in national and international innovation initiatives.

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7.2 Incubation Centre

The University shall establish an Incubation Centre to nurture startups from ideation to commercialization by providing comprehensive infrastructural, technical, financial, and business support.

Facilities

Co-working Space

- Dedicated office space and shared workstations.
- Flexible seating arrangements.
- Printing, scanning, and photocopying facilities.
- Administrative and reception support.
- The co-working space shall be available free of cost for faculty members, Students and staff. External users may access the facility on payment of nominal charges, as determined by the University/Incubation Centre from time to time

Laboratory Access

- Access to University laboratories, research centres, and Centres of Excellence.
- Prototype fabrication and product testing facilities.
- Technical support from laboratory staff.

Internet and Computing Facilities

- High-speed internet connectivity and secure Wi-Fi.
- Computing facilities with licensed software.
- Cloud computing and digital collaboration platforms.
- Access to simulation software, research databases, and design tools.

Meeting and Conference Facilities

- Meeting rooms for discussions with mentors, investors, customers, and collaborators.
- Conference halls for workshops, seminars, product demonstrations, and investor presentations.
- Audio-visual equipment and facilities for virtual and hybrid meetings.

Business Mentoring

The Incubation Centre shall provide mentoring in:

- Business model development
- Product design and development
- Market research and customer validation
- Financial planning and accounting
- Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and patent filing
- Legal and regulatory compliance

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- Company incorporation and statutory registrations
- Branding and digital marketing
- Sales strategy and customer acquisition
- Investment readiness and fundraising
- Leadership and organizational development

The Incubation Centre shall also provide:

- Startup registration support
- Intellectual property protection assistance
- Access to government grants, CSR funding, angel investors, and venture capital
- Industry networking opportunities
- Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDPs)
- Workshops, boot camps, hackathons, and innovation competitions
- Technology transfer and commercialization support
- Internship opportunities within incubated startups
- Support for participation in national and international startup competitions, exhibitions, and innovation events.

8. Student Start-up Policy

8.1 Student Entrepreneurship

The University encourages students to actively engage in innovation and entrepreneurship while pursuing their academic programmes. Students may:

- Establish startups during the course of their academic programme.
- Undertake startup projects as part of academic coursework, internships, or capstone projects.
- Avail themselves of a semester or one-year break, in accordance with University regulations, to develop and scale their startups.
- Submit startup-related work, prototypes, or commercially viable products for project, dissertation, or thesis evaluation, subject to approval by the competent academic authority.

8.2 Academic Flexibility

To promote entrepreneurship without compromising academic standards, the University may provide academic flexibility to eligible student entrepreneurs, subject to approval by the competent authority.

(a) Attendance Relaxation

Students actively involved in approved startup activities may be granted attendance relaxation in accordance with university regulations, provided that the prescribed learning outcomes and academic requirements are satisfactorily achieved.

(b) Academic Credits for Startup Activities

Students may earn academic credits for approved startup and innovation activities, including:

- Idea generation and validation
- Prototype design and development
- Product and process development
- Business model and business plan preparation
- Market research and customer validation
- Technology commercialization
- Startup internships
- Incubation and acceleration activities

The award of academic credits shall be governed by the Academic Regulations of the University and recommendations of the concerned Board of Studies.

(c) Flexible Assessment

Where feasible and permitted under the Academic Regulations, student entrepreneurs may be provided:

- Alternative modes of assessment
- Online presentations and progress reviews
- Evaluation based on startup milestones, innovation outcomes, and project deliverables

9. Faculty Startup Policy

9.1 Purpose

The University recognizes the pivotal role of faculty members in promoting innovation, translational research, technology commercialization, and entrepreneurship. This policy provides a framework that enables faculty members to establish, mentor, and support startups while ensuring that their teaching, research, extension, and administrative responsibilities are effectively fulfilled.

9.2 Faculty Participation

Faculty members may participate in startups in one or more of the following capacities:

- Founder or Co-founder
- Technical Advisor
- Scientific Advisor
- Mentor
- Consultant
- Director or Member of the Advisory Board
- Investor or Equity Holder, subject to university regulations

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Faculty members are encouraged to:

- Establish technology-based startups.
- Undertake consultancy assignments for startups and industries.
- Commercialize research outcomes through licensing, technology transfer, or startup creation.
- Mentor student entrepreneurs and incubated startups.
- Faculty will be allowed to work on Start-up for 20 % of official time

9.3 Academic Flexibility

To promote innovation and entrepreneurship, the University may provide academic flexibility to eligible faculty members, subject to approval by the competent authority. Such flexibility may include:

- Adjustment of teaching workload for approved startup and commercialization activities
- Permission to undertake consultancy, industry collaboration, and startup mentoring
- Participation in incubation, technology transfer, and innovation programmes
- Faculty will be allowed to work on Start-up for 20 % of official time

9.4 Eligibility

The following categories of faculty members shall be eligible to participate under this policy:

- Regular Faculty Members
- Contractual Faculty Members, subject to University approval
- Professors Emeritus
- Adjunct Faculty Members

10. Intellectual Property Ownership & Commercialization

10.1 Default Ownership — Where an innovation or Startup is linked to research carried out at the University — including the use of university resources, facilities, funding, or faculty supervision — the Intellectual Property (IP) so generated shall, by default, vest with the University.

10.2 IP Transfer to a Faculty-Led Startup — Where the Faculty member is the inventor of such IP, the Faculty member may request the IP cell of university to transfer the IP to his/her Start-up or new company formed for the purpose of commercialization. Such request shall be submitted to the Innovation & Incubation Cell and shall be subject to review and approval by the competent authority.

10.3 Conditions of IP Transfer — Upon approval of the transfer request referred to in Clause 10.2, the following conditions shall apply to the Startup:

(i) Royalty: The Startup shall pay a royalty of up to 5% (five percent) of revenue / net sales to the Incubation Centre or the University, payable once the product or technology is commercialized.

(ii) Equity: The Startup shall be incubated at the University Incubation Centre and shall allot equity in the range of 5% to 10% to the Incubation Centre, in consideration of the incubation support, infrastructure, and mentorship provided.

(iii) Equity waiver: To promote innovation, entrepreneurship, and the growth of early-stage start-ups, the University may, on the recommendation of the Innovation & Incubation Cell and with the approval of the Competent Authority, waive or reduce the equity requirement for eligible start-ups. Such waiver may be considered based on factors including the novelty of the innovation, social or national impact, technology readiness level, commercialization potential, availability of external funding, financial constraints of the start-up, or other strategic considerations. The decision regarding the extent of the equity waiver shall be made on a case-by-case basis and shall be duly recorded by the University.

10.4 Formalization — The specific royalty percentage (up to the 5% ceiling) and equity percentage (within the 5–8% range) applicable to a given Startup shall be determined by the Innovation & Incubation Council on a case-by-case basis and shall be recorded in a formal IP Transfer & Equity Agreement executed between the University and the Startup prior to commercialization

11. Funding Support

11.1 Seed Funding

To promote innovation and entrepreneurship, the University provide seed fund to eligible start-up's, subject to the availability of funds and approval by the Start-up and Innovation Council. The Seed fund limits may be revised periodically with the approval of the competent authority.

11.2 Sources of Funding

Financial support may be mobilized through:

- University Innovation Fund
- Government Grants and Innovation Schemes
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Funds
- Angel Investors
- Venture Capital Funds

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- Industry Sponsorships
- Financial Institutions and Banks
- National and International Funding Agencies

12. Research Commercialization

The University shall promote the translation of research outcomes into commercially viable technologies, products, and services by encouraging:

- Patent filing and intellectual property protection
- Technology licensing and transfer
- Product and process commercialization
- Industry-sponsored research
- Startup formation based on research outcomes
- Proof-of-Concept (PoC) and prototype development
- Collaborative research with industry and research organizations

13. Start-up Evaluation Process

The University shall establish a transparent, objective, and merit-based evaluation system for the selection, incubation, funding, mentoring, and monitoring of startups. The evaluation process shall identify innovative, technically feasible, commercially viable, and socially impactful startup proposals.

13.1 Start-up Evaluation Committee (SEC)

Startup proposals shall be evaluated by a **Startup Evaluation Committee (SEC)** constituted by the Vice-Chancellor.

The Committee may comprise:

- Dean – Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Chairperson)
- Dean – Research and Development
- Director/Head of Incubation Centre
- Faculty Experts
- Industry Experts
- Startup Founders and Entrepreneurs
- Finance Expert
- Intellectual Property (IPR) Expert
- Representative of the Start-up and Innovation Council

The Committee may co-opt additional experts whenever required.

Evaluation Process

The evaluation shall be conducted in four stages.

Stage I – Preliminary Screening

- Verification of eligibility.
- Scrutiny of applications and supporting documents.
- Assessment of proposal completeness.
- Preliminary evaluation of innovation and originality.

Stage II – Technical Evaluation

- Presentation of the startup proposal before the Evaluation Committee.
- Assessment of technical feasibility.
- Evaluation of the prototype or Proof-of-Concept (PoC), where applicable.
- Identification of technical risks and implementation challenges.

Stage III – Business Evaluation

- Assessment of market demand and customer needs.
- Evaluation of the business model and commercialization strategy.
- Competitive analysis.
- Financial planning and revenue model.
- Scalability and long-term sustainability.

Stage IV – Final Approval

- Comprehensive assessment by the Startup Evaluation Committee.
- Recommendation for incubation, mentoring, funding, or proposal refinement.
- Final approval by the Start-up and Innovation Council, wherever applicable.

13.2 Evaluation Parameters

Startup proposals shall be assessed on the following criteria:

(a) Innovation and Novelty

- Originality of the idea
- Uniqueness of the product, technology, or service
- Degree of innovation over existing solutions
- Potential for Intellectual Property creation

(b) Technical Feasibility

- Technical and scientific soundness
- Availability of technology and infrastructure
- Prototype readiness
- Technology Readiness Level (TRL)
- Capability of the startup team

(c) Market Potential

- Target market identification
- Market demand and size
- Customer value proposition
- Competitive positioning
- Commercialization potential

(d) Scalability

- Business growth potential
- Replicability of the business model
- National and international expansion opportunities
- Long-term sustainability

(e) Financial Viability

- Revenue model
- Cost structure
- Investment requirements
- Profitability and cash-flow projections
- Funding strategy

(f) Social and Environmental Impact

- Contribution to societal development
- Employment generation
- Environmental sustainability
- Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Benefits to industry and local communities

13.3 Presentation and Pitch

Shortlisted applicants shall present their startup proposal before the Startup Evaluation Committee. The presentation shall ordinarily include:

- Problem statement
- Proposed solution
- Prototype or demonstration
- Business model
- Market validation
- Intellectual Property status
- Financial projections
- Funding requirements
- Implementation roadmap

The Committee may seek clarifications and recommend modifications before granting approval.

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13.4 Monitoring and Review

Approved startups shall be monitored periodically against predefined milestones, including:

- Prototype development
- Product validation
- Patent filing
- Customer acquisition
- Revenue generation
- External investment received
- Technology commercialization
- Employment generation

Progress reviews shall normally be conducted every six months. Continuation of incubation, funding, mentoring, and other institutional support shall be subject to satisfactory performance and achievement of approved milestones.

14. Incentives

14.1 Incentives for Students Faculties and Staff

The University shall provide a range of incentives to encourage students to actively participate in innovation, entrepreneurship, startup development, research commercialization, and intellectual property creation. These incentives are intended to foster an entrepreneurial culture, recognize outstanding achievements, and motivate students to transform innovative ideas into sustainable enterprises.

(a) Startup Grants

The University may provide seed fund to eligible student, Faculty and staff startups at various stages of startup development, including:

- Idea validation
- Prototype development
- Product development
- Pilot implementation
- Market validation
- Business model development
- Startup registration and initial operational expenses

Financial assistance shall be provided in accordance with the University's Funding Support Policy and shall be subject to the availability of funds and approval by the Start-up and Innovation Council.

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(b) Innovation Awards
The University shall institute annual awards to recognize outstanding innovations and entrepreneurial achievements. The awards may include:

- Best Student Startup Award
- Innovation Excellence Award
- Best Prototype Award
- Social Innovation Award
- Women Entrepreneur Award
- Green Innovation Award
- Technology Innovation Award
- Emerging Entrepreneur Award

Awardees may receive certificates, medals or trophies, cash prizes, and opportunities to represent the University at national and international innovation forums, startup competitions, and entrepreneurship events.

(c) Patent Filing Support

The University shall encourage students to protect their intellectual property by providing assistance for:

- Patentability assessment
- Prior art search
- Patent drafting
- Patent filing and prosecution
- Copyright registration
- Trademark registration
- Industrial design registration

Subject to the University's Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy and the availability of funds, the University may bear part or all of the expenses associated with protecting intellectual property generated through approved innovation and startup activities.

(d) Incubation Support
Eligible student startups shall have access to the University's Incubation Centre and may receive:

- Co-working and office space
- Laboratory and research facilities
- Prototype development support
- Technical mentoring
- Business mentoring
- Legal and financial advisory services
- Intellectual Property (IPR) support
- Networking opportunities with industry experts, investors, alumni, and entrepreneurs
- Assistance in obtaining government grants, seed funding, angel investment, venture capital, and other external funding opportunities. Refer 7.2

14.2 Incentives for Faculty

The University shall encourage faculty members to actively participate in innovation, translational research, technology commercialization, entrepreneurship, and startup development by providing appropriate incentives and institutional support. The incentive framework is intended to recognize and reward faculty contributions towards research commercialization, intellectual property creation, industry collaboration, startup mentoring, and entrepreneurial leadership.

(a) Recognition in Performance Appraisal

Innovation, entrepreneurship, startup development, patent generation, technology commercialization, consultancy, and industry collaboration shall be considered as significant achievements during the Annual Performance Appraisal Process, in accordance with university regulations.

(b) Start-up Mentoring Incentives

Faculty members who mentor student or faculty startups may be provided with appropriate incentives, including:

- Recognition certificates
- Mentoring honoraria, as per university norms
- Awards for outstanding mentorship
- Priority for participation in entrepreneurship and innovation programmes
- Institutional recognition during annual academic and research awards

(c) Revenue Sharing Benefits

Faculty members involved in the commercialization of research outcomes, patents, technologies, software, or intellectual property shall be entitled to revenue-sharing benefits in accordance with the University's Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy and Revenue Sharing Guidelines. Refer 10.3(ii)

15. Ethics and Compliance

All startups supported under this policy shall adhere to the highest standards of ethics, integrity, transparency, and professional conduct. Every startup shall comply with:

- Applicable Central and State Government laws and regulations
- Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) laws
- Environmental, health, and safety regulations
- Data privacy, cybersecurity, and information security requirements
- Financial and taxation regulations
- University statutes, ordinances, rules, and code of conduct
- Ethical standards relating to research, innovation, and entrepreneurship

The University reserves the right to withdraw institutional support from startups that violate statutory provisions, ethical norms, or University regulations.

16. Monitoring and Review

The Start-up and Innovation Council shall periodically monitor and review the implementation of this policy and the performance of supported startups.

The review shall ordinarily be conducted every six months and shall include:

- Progress of incubated startups
- Achievement of predefined milestones
- Utilization of financial assistance
- Prototype and product development
- Patent filing and Intellectual Property generation
- Technology transfer and commercialization outcomes
- Investment attracted
- Startup survival, growth, and scalability
- Employment generation
- Overall impact on the University's innovation ecosystem

Based on the review, the Council may recommend continuation, modification, enhancement, or discontinuation of institutional support.

17. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The effectiveness of the University's Startup and Innovation ecosystem shall be assessed using measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including:

- Number of start-up's established
- Number of start-ups successfully incubated
- Number of patents filed and granted
- Number of technologies licensed or commercialized
- Number of prototypes developed
- External funding and investment attracted
- Number of industry collaborations established
- Employment opportunities generated
- Revenue generated by startups
- Number of faculty and student entrepreneurs
- Number of innovation awards received
- Number of startup mentoring programmes conducted
- Start-up survival and growth rate
- Contribution to regional and national innovation ecosystems

The Startup and Innovation Council shall review these KPIs annually and recommend corrective measures for continuous improvement.

18. Policy Review

This Policy shall be reviewed **every** year, or earlier if required, to ensure its continued relevance and alignment with evolving national policies, statutory regulations, technological advancements, and the University's strategic priorities.

The Start-up and Innovation Council shall recommend amendments to the Policy, which shall become effective upon approval by the appropriate statutory authorities of the University.

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