UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

INNOVATION POLICY

Contents   **Page**

1.0 Preamble

Innovation is important for economic growth and enhancement in today's knowledge driven global economy. It is fundamental to social equity and inclusion and the overall wellbeing of citizens across the world, particularly in developing economies like Ghana. Innovation, defined as an improvement on or significant contribution to an existing product, process, or service, is distinct from just the invention of new products. It may apply to creative practices, processes, relationships, business models or institutional changes. Innovation has also been described as the ability to create and capture economic value from invention. It is usually the result of a complex interplay of factors. It relates to the commercialisation of ideas, often involving key organisations and institutions and their linkages - including the public and private sectors and academia – working harmoniously together in the production and use of new, economically useful knowledge.

2.0 Purpose of Policy

As UG moves towards the attainment of its vision of becoming a world-class research-intensive university, the importance of building stakeholder confidence in its research, development, and entrepreneurial systems to advance a strong culture of innovation cannot be over-emphasised.

The Innovation Policy is intended to promote the translation of UG's discoveries into useful products, processes, and services. It outlines the structures and mechanisms needed to unite stakeholders within a harmonised UG innovation ecosystem. It subscribes to the University's mission, "to create an enabling environment that makes it increasingly relevant to national and global development through cutting edge research as well as high quality teaching and learning," with a view to providing value to individuals and society, endeavoring to uplift the human condition.

This Policy thus, seeks to create an enabling environment for academia-industry-government partnerships to promote innovation and entrepreneurship. The Policy is informed by relevant international, national, and sectoral policies and goals, including National Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy for Ghana (draft), Clarivate Analytics Indicators for Innovative Universities, as well as contemporary development trends that encourage innovation and facilitate innovation transfer and socio-economic growth.

The objectives of the Policy are as follows:

   a) To promote innovation within all units of the University.

b) To provide a framework and procedures for guiding and supporting innovation at UG.

c) To foster a coordinated innovation culture among students, faculty, and staff, provide guidance on innovation mentoring and benchmarking with international best practice.

d) To facilitate strong links between the University and stakeholders; particularly, industry and government.

3.0 Application and Scope

This Innovation Policy applies to all Stakeholders (employees and students at the University, including visiting researchers, adjunct faculty, post-doctoral fellows, and honorary appointees).

The Policy recognises the following as potential channels of innovation:

a. Science parks, incubation hubs, and makerspaces
b. Commercialisation partnerships (knowledge transfer, technology transfer, etc.)
c. University spin-offs, startups.
d. Collaboration with industry
   - Commissioned research/work
   - Collaborative research relating to common technological challenges
   - Infrastructure for technological collaboration [use of UG facilities (libraries, laboratories, and farmlands, etc.)]
e. Local and International research
f. Publications
   - Joint publications with industry
   - Citation of UG research and input into policy
g. Intellectual property management
h. Entrepreneurial training and incentives for academic and student entrepreneurship
i. Development research funding.

4.0 Policy Principles

The Innovation Policy is based on the following principles and statements to:
a. Guide the governance, management, and coordination of the innovation process.

b. Improve conditions for stakeholders to harness their innovative acumen and foster partnerships.

c. Enhance conditions that facilitate knowledge and technology transfer to industry, government, and society**.**

d. Introduce and strengthen mechanisms to ensure equitable returns to Stakeholders.

e. Contribute to the social and economic development of Ghana.

5.0 Policy Statements

5.1 Guide the governance, management, and coordination of the innovation process.

UG recognises that an effective innovation policy requires appropriate levels of authority and autonomy, and that a robust and efficient system for managing innovation will motivate the University community to engage in activities that drive innovation. Therefore, the University will strengthen existing innovation structures and systems and establish new ones for efficient and effective governance, management, and coordination of innovation at all levels of its operations.

Innovation support systems presently available at UG include the following:
    i) Internally funded competitive grant schemes for faculty and staff research
    ii) Intellectual Property (IP) policy and management infrastructure for IP disclosure and registration
    iii) Innovation and entrepreneurship programmes
    iv) Innovation hubs
    v) Technology commercialisation management policies and related documents.

5.1.1 Strengthen existing systems and develop new ones to sustainably manage and coordinate the process of innovation for all stakeholders.

The University will:

a. Develop clear terms of reference to guide the functions of existing units whose mandate pertains to innovation-related functions (e.g., Technology Transfer and Intellectual Property Services Team (TTIPS) at ORID) and establish new ones with clear responsibilities as may be required, to sustainably coordinate the process of innovation.

b. Build on existing programmes or activities to enhance visibility of the innovation arm(s) of the relevant units at ORID.

c. Strengthen the chain of services that facilitate the innovation process.

d. Promote accountability and develop guidelines and relevant documents to facilitate the execution of this Policy.

5.2 Improve conditions for stakeholders to harness their innovative acumen and foster partnerships.

An environment that enables and challenges stakeholders of the University to pursue innovation and/or collaborate with others is critical if a culture of innovation is to be established, improved and sustained.

To create and/or enhance the desired enabling environment, UG will:

a. Support the implementation of the UG Industry Engagement Strategy and Guidelines for Industry Engagement to facilitate engagement between UG employees, students, and industry.

b. Disseminate widely the Guidelines for engagement with stakeholders.

c. Promote platforms to foster progressive and productive interaction among stakeholders to enhance the conduct of relevant innovation related activities, including commissioned work, consultancy, contracts, formalised engagements with innovation-related agencies, etc.

d. Support innovative approaches to job functions as a recognised quality for institutional advancement and staff progression.

Applicable Policy/ Strategy/ Guideline

No.	Policy/ Strategy/ Guideline	Access
1	**UG Industry Engagement Strategy**	Contact the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Development (orid@ug.edu.gh)
2	**Industry Engagement Guideline**	Contact the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Development (orid@ug.edu.gh)

5.2.1 Advocate and build the capacity of the University's stakeholders to drive Innovation.

The University will:

a. Institute measures including a strong digital presence to create awareness and communicate up-to-date and relevant information about innovation. This will be achieved through the development and maintenance of an active innovation inventory and marketing of technologies through a myriad of channels [e.g., UG website, ORID webpage, ORID/TTIPs/innovation unit webpage, UGTechOnline (an online portal of technologies or innovations), InspiringUG Magazine, etc.).

b. Organise regular training and awareness programmes to enhance a culture of innovation amongst stakeholders (e.g., establishing hubs and makerspaces, setting up spinoffs and startups, strengthened collaboration with industry and appropriate exploitation of Intellectual Property).

c. Generate annual reports that document innovations and contributions to the development of a competitive and vibrant economy.

5.2.2 To effectively manage resource allocation and rewards for innovation.

This Policy recognises that innovation can be resource intensive and requires a sustainable pool of funding to support the categories and stages of innovation.

To build and sustain an innovation fund, the University will:

a. Institute a central funding mechanism dedicated to promoting innovative activities (e.g., an UGRF-like fund to support activities such as concept development, proof-of-concept, prototyping etc).

b. Develop mechanisms to encourage employees and students of UG to mobilise resources to support early-stage innovation. This includes for example, facilitation of the disclosure process for innovations/inventions that require acquisition of Intellectual Property rights and funding support.

c. Promote activities aimed at mobilising funds from national and international organisations towards innovation.

d. Develop, operationalise and review periodically guidelines to identify and reward staff for outstanding research and innovation.

e. Develop a system or guidelines that will mainstream innovation as an incentive for student, faculty, and administrative staff career progression.

5.3   Enhance conditions to facilitate knowledge and technology transfer to industry, government, and society.

UG anticipates that knowledge and technologies will be transferred to
   a. Entrepreneurs and businesses in various sectors of the economy to enhance productivity and competitiveness.
   b. Government and policy makers to inform policy development.
   c. The society to improve upon livelihoods and well-being.

Thus, UG will:
   a. Develop a guideline for matching innovative technologies emanating from research and related activities to industry.
   b. Facilitate the provision of consultancy services and core facility usage
   c. Develop and operationalise appropriate guidelines to formalise and support transfer and commercialisation of technologies between UG and industry.

Applicable Policy / Guideline

No.	Guideline	Access
1	**UG Intellectual Property Policy**	https://orid.ug.edu.gh/ug-intellectual-property-policy
2	**Guidelines for Technology Transfer**	Contact the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Development (orid@ug.edu.gh)
3	**Guideline for Industry Engagement**	Contact the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Development (orid@ug.edu.gh)

5.4   Introduce and strengthen mechanisms to ensure equitable returns to stakeholders.

The distribution of income from commercialisation of Innovations will be based on provisions in the applicable policies e.g., UG Intellectual Property Policy.

Applicable Policy

No.	Guideline/Policy	Access
1	**UG Intellectual Property Policy**	https://orid.ug.edu.gh/ug-intellectual-property-policy
2.	**Guideline for the Distribution of Income from Commercialisation of Intellectual Property / Technology Transfer***	Contact the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Development (orid@ug.edu.gh)

5.5 To contribute to the social and economic development of Ghana.

This Policy views translational research through innovative processes as an important means of contributing to the upliftment of the human condition in addition to providing value to individuals and society.

Thus, UG will:

a. Showcase innovation outcomes widely to increase visibility and enhance access by interested parties. This is expected to facilitate the growth of the innovation ecosystem in Ghana.

b. Build a robust innovative culture that will contribute significantly towards business growth and expansion, entrepreneurship, and nation-building.

c. Align the research and development focus towards improving the socio-economic environment.

d. Adopt a culture of transparent stakeholder engagement geared towards public benefit.

6.0 Dispute Resolution

Any dispute or claim arising from or in connection with this Policy which cannot be amicably settled between the parties shall be channeled through the existing dispute resolution mechanisms including, referral to the UG Appeals Board in the first stance,

and subsequently for arbitration in accordance with the Alternative Dispute Resolution Act, 2010 (Act 798).

7.0 Policy Implementation

This Policy as presently set forth, and as it may be amended from time to time, is binding on all stakeholders of UG.

i. This Policy shall take effect immediately upon approval by the University. Any amendment shall be effected in a similar manner.
ii. ORID is responsible for the enforcement, implementation, administration, and management of the University's Innovation Policy.
iii. Any related enquiries should be directed to the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Research, Innovation and Development.
iv. A breach of the Innovation Policy shall be considered as a violation of University policy which may lead to an imposition of sanctions or disciplinary actions.

7.0 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	October 2022	Business and Executive Committee	

Appendix 1 - Key Definitions

The following definitions shall apply in this Policy.

Word/Term	Definition / Meaning
Collaborative Research	Research involving coordination between researchers, institutions, organisations, and/or communities with the aim of achieving a common goal for the benefit of all parties.
Commissioned Work	Work created by a person specifically employed or commissioned by the University for that purpose.
Consultancy	The provision of expert or professional advice by UG faculty or staff to another organization or a third party. It also refers to the use of (research) equipment owned by the University on a specific project.
Entrepreneur	A person who sets up a business or businesses, taking on financial risks in the hope of profit.
Incubation Hub	A workspace that offers start-ups and entrepreneurs access to resources and practical knowledge to build and sustain their enterprises.
Industry	The companies and activities involved in a type of business.
Innovation	An improvement on or significant contribution to an existing product, process, or service. Innovation relates to the commercialisation of new ideas.
Intellectual Property	This refers to creations of the mind used in commerce. Intellectual property includes inventions, literary and artistic works, symbols, names, images, and designs.
Knowledge transfer	The process of sharing or disseminating knowledge, know-how, or skill, from a source to a recipient.
Makerspace	A workspace where people with common interest can meet, share resources and knowledge to make and build things. A Makerspace promotes innovation through hands-on experimentation.
ORID	Office of Research, Innovation and Development. The Office is responsible for the promotion, facilitation, and co-ordination of research activities in the University.
Science park	An area that accommodates and fosters the growth of tenant firms or the development of science based or technological industries, and is affiliated with a university based on ownership, governance and/or proximity.
Start-up	A company in the initial stages of operations. A Start-up is usually focused on a single product or service that the founders want to

Word/Term	Definition / Meaning
	bring to market.
Spin-off	An independent division of a company or organization established purposefully to commercialise a new technology.
Technology Transfer	The process of moving technology or discoveries from a person or organisation to another person or organisation. Technology transfer can occur through publications, conference presentations, research relations with industry, the entering of graduate students into the workforce, the transformation of scientific outcomes into new products and services that benefit society.
Technology Transfer and Intellectual Property Services (TTIPS) Team	This is one of the operational teams at ORID. The TTIPS team leads and manages the University's engagement with industry Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer activities.
University	Refers to the University of Ghana and all affiliated institutions or organisations or governed by the University.