VALLEY UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

RESEARCH AND INNOVATIONS POLICY

MARCH 2021

This Research Policy was approved and adopted by the University Council at its ....meeting held on

08. March 2021

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SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL

....
CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL

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ABBREVIATIONS

ICT   -   Information Communication Technology

IPM   -   Intellectual property management

MoU   -   Memorandum of Understanding

R&D   -   Research and Development

FOREWORD

Valley University of Science and Technology is the leading higher education institution in the country with human power and infrastructure to generate new knowledge through research. The overall aim is to reinforce vigorously the university's status as a university that sustains and adds value to the Ugandan culture, to the natural environment and to the economy and society of Uganda and the wider world. The university, therefore, shall put in place a research agenda with priorities that address national and global challenges.

The Research and innovations Policy supports the overall ambitions of the university, providing depth articulation of university goals as a research-led university, and setting out key strategic approaches to be undertaken to enable the achievement of these goals.

The research and innovations policy cannot be implemented in isolation: areas of interaction with other aspects of the institutional, for example the strategic plan, quality assurance policy, gender policy, ICT policy and administration will be apparent. It is important that such interactions are fully explored and approaches agreed upon to enable successful implementation of this policy

This Research and Innovations Policy for Valley University of Science and Technology addresses internal and external stakeholders' needs either as research collaborators, funding agencies or research clientele. Once implemented, this should propel Valley University of Science and Technology forward to be one of the research-led Universities in the region.

DR. ENOS K. RWASHEEMA
Vice Chancellor, Valley University of Science and Technology

1. BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH AND INNOVATIONS POLICY

Research for Development (R&D) and innovation today absorbs very considerable resources. These research and development activities have great influence on the policies and growth of institutions, both public and private, and nations as a whole. Research and innovations should be rooted in the interaction between these activities and economic, social, political and institutional processes. A policy in this direction must respond to problems posed by the very innovations, R&D, Technology and Science, and related activities concerned with the acquisition of knowledge (learning) and its exploitation.

The ultimate benefit of research lies not only in the generation of new knowledge but in the translation of knowledge into technologies, interventions and strategies effectively and appropriately delivered to the poor. In order to reach this objective, it is imperative that the entire research process be pursued within the context of contemporary knowledge, good ethics, effective policy, adequate resources and international cooperation. Within the context of Valley University of Science and Technology, research and innovations necessitate multi-disciplinary approaches that support the exploration of new ways of using these perspectives and methodologies.

Teaching/learning and research have been unit-based presenting increasing challenges for university wide coordination and management at Valley University of Science and Technology. This trend has had several effects one of which is less visibility of Valley University of Science and Technology on the web since the milliard research endeavours have been attributed to individuals within the university rather than necessarily the institution itself. The Research and Innovation policy seeks to reverse this trend in a two-prong approach: encouraging and providing more opportunity for team/multidisciplinary research and innovation on the one hand, and rationalizing these efforts in a broader university framework of research and innovations. The policy puts emphasis on provision of research opportunities, quality and ethics in research and innovation, efficiency and effectiveness in coordination and management of research and innovation at Valley University of Science and Technology.

In achieving the aims of this policy, the university is committed to working closely with national and international organizations that support and monitor research activities. In Uganda, this refers to such organizations like the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology, National Agricultural Research Systems, National Council for Higher Education.

The Research and Innovations Policy has been developed under the framework of the university vision, mission and core values.

2.   RATIONALE OF THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATIONS POLICY

The overall aim of the Research and Innovations Policy is to strengthen research capacity and output, and increase the contribution of Valley University of Science and Technology to the world of knowledge and innovation.

3.   POLICY OBJECTIVES

1) To create an enabling, harmonious, transparent and efficient environment for research and innovations
2) To strengthen research management and coordination
3) To improve research and publications culture
4) To improve funding for research and innovations
5) To improve gender responsiveness of the University through research and innovations.

4.   SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION POLICY

This policy shall apply to all the researchers of the University and for the purpose of this policy 'researchers' are defined to include

1. All staff, temporary and permanent, who are active in teaching, research, administration and provision of any form of support to the core functions of the University;
2. All students registered with the University;
3. All mentors, guides, external experts and sponsors associated with any of the research activities of the University
4. All academic and administrative departments of the University;

This policy shall apply to all the research and related activities of the University and for the purpose of this policy research and related activities will inter alia include

1. Research activities including basic, strategic and applied research undertaken either for fulfilling the requirements of academic degrees or for solving problems
2. Scholarly activities intended to expand knowledge boundaries by analysis, synthesis and interpretation of ideas and information by making use of rigorous methodologies
3. Knowledge compilation and communication initiatives for keeping abreast of academic developments in any knowledge domain such as writing of textbooks, chapters of textbooks, monographs; developing/updating curriculum, etc.
4. Creative activities involving the generation of new ideas, innovations, or artefacts, including design in any field of knowledge which leads to the development of new knowledge, understanding or expertise;
5. Research projects of students undertaken as part of the curriculum or for enriching it
6. **Publication, presentation and communication of the research outcomes and related activities**

5.   POLICY GUIDING PRINCIPLES
1. Create an enabling environment for research and innovations
2. Strengthen research management and coordination
3. Improve research and publications culture
4. Improve funding for research and Innovations
5. To improve gender-responsiveness through research and innovations

6.   POLICY PROVISIONS

6.1   Create an enabling environment for research and innovations

6.1.1   Background
The policy recognizes that a positive harmonious, transparent and efficient environment is essential to foster research and innovation in the university. Within the portfolio of university activities, research (basic and applied), teaching and outreach should be appropriately balanced to ensure efficient creation of knowledge and its transfer. Such an environment will be created through the following strategies:

6.1.2   Policy Statements
1. Create centers of excellence that are adequately equipped and maintained for use by all interested parties in the University in a sustainable manner.
2. Support staff members' access to the internet and other ICT services.
3. Support researchers to attend and present papers/posters at national and international conferences.
4. Valley University of Science and Technology shall generate a research agenda periodically
5. Facilitate national, regional and international collaboration, and global networking.
6. Provide research support services including management information systems and library resources that facilitate access to international literature and data bases.

6.1.3   Strategies
1. Develop guidelines for setting up centers of excellence
2. Encourage and support the establishment of user guidelines for researchers
3. Encourage the formation of multidisciplinary research teams/groups at centers of excellence
4. Ensure that capacity to maintain the research equipment is developed e.g. through enhanced training of technical staff and users
5. Require research equipment and other resources acquired during the life of any research project to revert to the University at termination of the project.
6. Provide internet and other ICT facilities for purposes of knowledge creation and dissemination.

7. Provide access to the e-resources and other ICT related common services/software for the purpose of data management and analysis
8. Researcher's time compensation at a rate to be decided by the University council, but proposed to be at least 5% of the total cost of a grant proposal as shall be determined by the relevant authorities.
9. Provision for travel support in the units' budgets to facilitate staff attendance at conferences
10. Inclusion of a budget line for attendance at conferences in the research projects
11. A requirement for staff to be supported to have obtained invitations to present papers/posters or to chair sessions at these meetings
12. Support shall be in part or total depending on availability of funds
13. Faculties shall formulate research priorities that will feed into the university research agenda.
14. The priorities identified shall reflect national research objectives, priorities and relevant international trends.
15. Research agenda shall promote both basic and applied research
16. The review of the research agenda shall be pegged to the review of the University Strategic Plan.
17. Enter into MoU with leading research and higher education institutions.
18. Operationalise any existing MoUs at Valley University of Science and Technology.
19. Subscribe to relevant data bases that provide information to researchers.
20. Create and maintain own research and innovations data base accessible to the university community and the general public.

6.2 Strengthen research management and coordination

6.2.1 Background

The policy recognizes that research activities carried out through various academic and research units in the university have to be managed and coordinated properly for the benefit of the entire university in a fair and transparent manner. This will be achieved through the following strategies:

6.2.2 Policy Statements

1. Support staff to continually update their skills in research management. This shall be achieved through:
2. Provide regulations for sourcing services related to research
3. Promote a mentoring and apprenticeship culture/approach in research.
4. Provide guidelines for supervisors and supervisees during the research process to ensure harmony, quality and timely completion.
5. Institute a Research, Innovation and Publications Committee to guide the research and innovation function of the University.

6. Strengthen the research management and coordination function at institutional and at unit levels. To this end:

6.2.3 Strategies
1. Conducting regular training workshops/seminars in grant proposal writing, financial management, scholarly writing and dissemination, etc
2. Developing and updating research management tools such as hand books and guidelines.
3. Support to staff to attend skills enhancement courses locally and internationally
4. Develop guidelines for engaging persons employed from research funds (research assistants, data managers, etc)
5. Require as part of the eligibility criteria for research support senior members of staff to work with junior members of staff and graduate students on research projects for mentoring and supervision
6. Support senior members of the academic community to work with junior members of staff to produce joint publications
7. Mainstream gender and actively involve women in research activities.
8. Develop, operationalise and review periodically guidelines for supervision of graduate students (qualification, appointment, remuneration, conduct etc)
9. Disseminate widely the rules and regulations for graduate study.
10. Develop a governance structure for research and coordination.
11. Research committee to specify the administrative responsibilities regarding research management at unit level.
12. Provide tools for internal procedures for approval, control, monitoring and coordination of research and innovations

6.3 Improve research and publications culture
6.3.1 Background
In order for the university to attain and maintain a good position in research output, the policy recognizes that the research and publication culture must be enhanced. This shall be realized through measures described hereunder:

6.3.2 Policy Statements
1. Provide incentives / reward for research
2. Provide and support platforms for dissemination of research outputs
3. Promote ethical conduct of research in the university.

6.3.3 Strategies
1. Ensure maintenance of satisfactory staff to student ratios in line with university establishment policy.
2. Require staff at levels of lecturer and above (or equivalent) to publish at least one paper in a peer reviewed journal yearly.

3. Require staff to spend at least 20% of their time on research and dissemination.
4. Require doctoral students in the course of their studies to publish at least one paper in a peer reviewed journal before they graduate.
5. Develop, operationalise and update periodically a system for tracking of staff research and outputs.
6. Require staff to publish research findings in form of policy briefs for use by policy makers.
7. Recognize and reward staff for outstanding performance in research and innovations.
8. Develop, operationalise and review periodically guidelines on how to identify and reward staff for outstanding research and innovation.
9. Create platforms for staff and students to disseminate research outputs such as seminars and locally hosted journals, newsletters and bulletins (both hardcopy and electronic)
10. Support units to organize regular conferences
11. Support regular public presentations and debates on topical areas of national or international concern
12. The university shall require doctoral students to publish their findings in any of the following forms:
    a. theses/dissertations as either monographs
    b. theses/dissertations with chapters as stand alone papers
    c. theses/dissertations as a compilation of papers either already published or accepted for publication
13. All research reports shall be deposited with the University Library and the national library at the researcher's cost.
14. Support the establishment of Institutional Review Committees to oversee ethical conduct of research at units.
15. Develop, operationalise and review periodically guidelines on good research practices and misconduct.

6.4 Improve funding for research and Innovations

6.4.1 Background

The policy realizes the importance of securing sufficient funds for staff members to conduct meaningful research, to attend national and international meetings, and to contribute to the research income of the university. It is envisaged that the strategies highlighted hereunder will improve funding for research and innovations.

6.4.2 Strategies

1. Commit at least 3% of the internally generated funds to research and innovations annually.
2. Require graduate and undergraduate students to contribute towards the cost of research. The amounts paid shall be recommended by the Committee of Research and Publications

3. Require all research projects to contribute atmost 15% of the research costs as institutional overheads/indirect costs. This shall be reviewed by the Committee of Research and Publications from time to time
4. Continue to solicit research funds from national and international organizations, both public and private. Solicitation of funding shall be encouraged and facilitated at individual, departmental, or faculty levels.
5. Engage the private sector to contribute towards research and innovations
   - Through contract research
   - Sponsoring of research chairs
   - Through joint ventures, licensing, patents and trade marks

6. Provide general information including databases on possible sources and modes of research funding on a regular basis.
7. Subscribe to databases that provide information on funding opportunities

6.5. To improve gender-responsiveness through research and innovations
This shall be realized through measures described hereunder:

6.5.1 Strategies
1. Provide opportunities for staff and students to train in gender focused research methodology
2. Integrate gender in research proposals
3. Encourage involvement of women in research teams.

7. IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION POLICY
7.1 Implementation:
a) This policy shall be implemented and reviewed periodically by the Committee of Research and Publications
b) This Policy shall be implemented or supplemented in any way consistent with its terms and those of other University policies.
c) In the event circumstances require any exception to the terms of this, such exceptions shall require the consent of the Vice Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor shall, when practical, seek the advice of the University Council prior to approving any exception to the terms of this Policy. When prior consultation is impractical, the Vice Chancellor shall promptly notify the University Council of any exceptions to the terms of this Policy.
d) This Policy shall not apply to on-going research projects and written agreements between the University and/or any external organization or individual, entered into prior to the date on which this Policy is adopted by the University Council.

e) If an existing written agreement is renewed, revised, or amended after the date on which this Policy is adopted by the University Council, reasonable attempts shall be made to conform such agreement with the requirements of this Policy as of the date on which it is renewed, revised, or amended.

f) After adoption of this policy, the University Senate shall be responsible for drawing out implementation guidelines or procedures from time to time.

7.2   Functions of the Research and Publications Committee

The specific roles and functions of the Committee of Research and Publications shall be as follows:

1. Facilitate the faculty in undertaking research and will work with the University management to set up a research fund for providing seed money
2. Provide research facilities in terms of laboratory equipment, research journals and research incentives etc. required by the faculty.
3. Encourage and promote a research culture (eg. teaching work load remission, opportunities for attending conferences etc.).
4. Encourage the faculty to undertake research by collaborating with other research organisations/ industry.
5. Create suitable procedures for giving due recognition for guiding research.
6. Organise workshops/ training programmes/ sensitisation programmes are conducted by the institution to promote a research culture on campus.
7. Invite industry to use the research facilities of the University and sponsor research projects.
8. Approach National and international organisations to fund major and minor research projects undertaken by the faculty / students
9. Make efforts to improve the availability of research infrastructure requirements to facilitate research.
10. Develop and implement an official Code of Ethics to check malpractices and plagiarism in research.
11. Create incentives for the faculty who receive recognition and research awards for research contributions from reputed professional bodies and agencies.
12. Encourage and promote the publication of research articles by the faculty in reputed/ refereed journals.
13. Create and maintain a database of research work and research projects undertaken by the faculty and students.
14. Facilitate the provision of consultancy services to industries / Government / Non- Government organizations / community/ public.
15. Prepare Rules & Guidelines for Grant of Research related leave and other remissions
16. Prepare a University research agenda with relative priorities.
17. Initiate, develop, implement and review periodically the policy on research and innovations.
18. Develop policy on sourcing and administration of research funds.
19. Oversee the scholarly aspects of Valley University of Science and Technology.

20. Submit to senate reports on its activities periodically

There shall be technical sub-committees to assist the University Committee of Research and Publications in implementing its mandate. These shall be determined and instituted by the Committee.

7.3 Notification:
The University shall inform all persons subject to this Policy of its terms after its adoption and at regular intervals thereafter.

8.   INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY STATEMENT
Valley University of Science and Technology has adopted a policy (approved by the Council on 8th March 2021). The statement takes as its guiding assumption that the faculty member (or members) who create the intellectual property, own the intellectual property. It has been the prevailing academic practice to treat the faculty member as the copyright owner of works that are created independently and at the faculty member's own initiative for traditional academic purposes. Although that assumption applies to the patent area as well, there is in the academic context a practice of arranging for agreements between university administrations and faculty inventors that provide in some detail a means of sharing income from commercial application of patented inventions.

Intellectual property created, made, or originated by a faculty member shall be the sole and exclusive property of the faculty, author, or inventor, except as he or she may voluntarily choose to transfer such property, in full, or in part.

The university shall own copyright only in the following 3 circumstances:
- The university expressly directs a faculty member to create a specified work, or the work is created as a specific requirement of employment or as an assigned institutional duty that may, for example, be included in a written job description or an employment agreement.
- The faculty author has voluntarily transferred the copyright, in whole or in part to the institution. Such transfer shall be in the form of a written document signed by the faculty author.
- The university has contributed to a "joint work". The institution can exercise joint ownership when it has contributed services and facilities to the production of the work that goes beyond what is traditionally provided to faculty members generally in the preparation of their course materials. Such arrangement is to be agreed to in writing, in advance, and in full conformance with other provisions of this intellectual property agreement.

Use the Intellectual Property
A collective bargaining agreement or institutional policy may also allow for institutions to use works created by faculty members without charge for educational and administrative purposes within the institution. These uses are to enable the institution to operate more efficiently for such purposes as complying with accreditation agency requests, not to infringe on legitimate faculty rights.

Material created for ordinary teaching use in the classroom and in department programs, such as syllabi, assignments, and tests, shall remain the property of the faculty author, but institutions shall be

permitted to use such material for internal instructional, educational, and administrative purposes, including satisfying requests of accreditation agencies for faculty-authored syllabi and course descriptions.

9.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the policy will require some actions that may involve changing existing procedures, while others will require financial support that would come from reallocating existing budgets or increasing them.

In light of the above, the University Council pronounced itself, not to approve any policy that exerts extra financial burden to the university, until a time when it will be deemed necessary. By implication, all policies are to utilize the existing services, facilities and human resources.

10.   MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring will be cardinal to the effective and efficient implementation of this Research Policy. This entails the collection, analysis and use of the data and information to determine the progress of implementation. Additionally, periodic evaluation of programme processes with a view to using the findings for improvement and planning, and impact assessment will be an integral part of the design, development and implementation of the Policy.

11.   REVIEW OF POLICY

This Research Policy will be reviewed every (3) three years to take into account emerging issues and trends.

NOTE: Any part or whole of this policy that violates the National laws is null and void. National Laws take precedence.