Alagappa University – Startup Incubation Centre
Application Guidelines

Abstract

The **Alagappa University – Startup Incubation Centre** is a comprehensive framework to enable all the stakeholders including the Students, Scholars, Faculty members, Staff, Alumni and Public, DPIIT Registered company to actively engage in innovation and startup related activities. This framework will also facilitate to bring uniformity across the units and stakeholders of the University in terms of Intellectual Property ownership management, technology licensing and institutional Startup policy, thus enabling creation of a robust Innovation and Startup ecosystem across the Alagappa University.

This Alagappa University – Startup Incubation Centre regulations framed following the guidelines of '**National Startup and Innovation Policy (NISP) for Students and Faculty**: A Guideline for Higher Education Institutions (2019)' by the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India and the '**Tamil Nadu Startup & Innovation Policy (2018-2023)**' for Micro, *Small and Medium Enterprises Department, Govt. of Tamil Nadu.*

I. About the University

Alagappa University is a state University, located at Karaikudi in Tamil Nadu. The University was brought into existence by an Act of the Tamil Nadu State Legislative Assembly in **May 1985** with the objective of fostering research, development and dissemination of knowledge in various branches of learning. The University has 44 Departments, 9 Centres and 2 Constituent Colleges on its campus. Forty six Affiliated Colleges located in the districts of Sivagangai and Ramanathapuram are part of the University.

Alagappa University has achieved many milestones. A few of them are as under

- Obtained **A++ Grade** with CGPA of 3.59 grading by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). Alagappa University is the first State University in Tamil Nadu to obtain the A++ grade.

- Obtained **Category–I status** by the UGC and occupies 2nd place out of 12 State Universities with Category-I Status in the Country. It is the only State University in Tamil Nadu to obtain the Category-I Status.

- Obtained Autonomy status (one among 60 Institutions in the country announced by MHRD (MoE)).

- Secured 44th position among Universities in National Institutional Ranking Framework **(NIRF) 2025** ranking.

- Placed within **501-600** ranking category (bandwidth) in **THE World University Ranking** 2022.
- Secured **24th** position in **QS India Ranking** in 2021.

1. Preamble:

- The Alagappa University has moto 'Excellence in Action' in all its activity with special focus on higher education, research and developmental activities, full filling the vision of the Founder, a great philanthropist, Padma Bhushan Vallal Dr. R.M. Alagappa Chettiar.
- The academic credentials, research outcomes, and inclusive rural education are evidence of the continuing efforts and contributions of Alagappa University for the Higher Education of the State and the Country. Towards bringing all the efforts of the University in the areas related to Innovation and Startups into a single roof, this **Alagappa University – Startup Incubation Centre** is formulated.
- The **Alagappa University – Startup Incubation Centre** intends to guide the units of Alagappa University to promote student driven innovations & start-ups and to engage the students and faculty in innovation and startup activities in campus.
- The entrepreneurial ecosystem in Alagappa University will play key role in identifying, mentoring, nurturing innovative and entrepreneurial potential of students, faculty and staff and transforming them into start-up entrepreneurs by providing guidance for funding, investment opportunities and networking support to make the innovation ventures successful.

2. Objectives:

- The **Startup Incubation Centre** aims at enabling the stakeholders viz. Students (UG, PG), Ph.D. Scholars, PDF, Faculty members, other Staff (including project staff), Alumni and Public (potential outsiders) to build, streamline and strengthen the innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem in Alagappa University.
- The **Startup Incubation Centre** shall be instrumental in leveraging the potential of science, student's creative problem solving and entrepreneurial mind-set, and promoting a strong intra and inter-institutional partnerships with ecosystem enablers and different stakeholders at regional, national and international level.

- **Startup Incubation Centre** is to provide an enabling and innovative ecosystem in the University in order to emerge as the 'Knowledge Capital' and 'Innovation Hub' of the State.

- To maximize industry engagement and collaborations with Research Parks of HEIs to promote innovation and entrepreneurship culture among the stakeholders of Alagappa University.

- To partner with investors and availing support from possible funding agencies in order to enable the Students / Scholars / Faculty Members / Other Staff / Alumni / Public / DPIIT Registered Companies to convert their innovative ideas into Startup ventures.
- Strengthening skill development activities towards Innovations and Startups.
- Extending support to social entrepreneurship for a positive social impact and inclusion.

Guidelines for Students/ Faculty/Company

The following guidelines will be followed: Applicants are advised to abide by the ''terms and conditions'' of the incubation facilities given below.

A. procedure and information Startup Engagment

The application must include

1. **For Students/ Faculty/Company (Check Annexure I for application format)**
   - ➢ Submission of a filled-in application along with necessary details.
   - ➢ For an DPIIT registered company, Company registration copy, in addition to the above, a Certificate of incorporation and Memorandum and Articles of Association, GST certificate, along with IPR and financial status with all other documents related to the company may be furnished.

2. **Application Evaluation Criteria:**
   1. Feasibility of the product idea in terms of innovation, technology content, innovation, timeliness and market potential
   2. Profile of the core team/ promoters
   3. Intellectual Property generated and the potential of the idea for IP creation
   4. Financial/ Commercial Viability and 5 year projections of Profit & Loss Account, Balance Sheet and Cash Flows.
   5. Funds requirement and viability of raising finance.
   6. Time to market.
   7. Break-even period
   8. Commercial Potential, demand and requirement in India
   9. Scalability

3. Research & Due Diligence:

The AUIIC is permitted to assess the research and Due Diligence of the incubates in future perspectives of the company in terms of competitiveness and long-term sustainability. It may request advice from different research funding agencies, ICMR, CSIR, DST, TDB, DBT, MSME, DIC and all state / central government funding agencies, etc.

Non-Disclosure: The incubates is/are expected to strictly maintain confidentiality throughout the application processes. The AUIIC has the right to terminate the processes if illegal activities and non-adherence of the terms and conditions.

4.University Support:

The following services may be provided on request to AUIIC under contract and consultation basis for startups by the organization.

- **Incubation space available:**
  Number of Built-in Laboratory Spaces: ~ 60 sq. ft. – 18 nos.
  Number of Co-Working Workbench Incubation Spaces: (to be added based on requirement)
- **Open floor (for self-set-up): 1 Floor**

Rules for space

Allotment : First cum first service and Agreement bond may be executed by the University

*(**Rental rates:** Rents of the incubation spaces are based on the floor area of the space occupied by the incubatees exclusively for their own use.*

***Security Deposit (SD):** A security deposit equivalent to one month's rent is to be deposited during the space booking after the proposal is accepted and the Provisional Allotment Letter is issued. SD amount will be refunded after surrendering the vacant modules to the satisfaction of the University. The SD amount will be adjusted with the outstanding rentals and other charges, if any, and the cost of damages, if any, during the process of surrendering the space.*

***Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)**: Advance rent of one month is to be deposited as the EMD during the space booking after the proposal is accepted and Provisional Allotment Letter is issued. EMD is to be adjusted with last month's rent without any interest. If there is any uncovered amount of damage or any other kind of loss, after adjusting security deposit, such amount will be recovered out of EMD. In a case where cost of damage exceeds SD and EMD, the balance amount shall be billed and to be paid by the incubatee.)*

Facilities at AUIIC

- Administrative office facilities may be provided on rental basis.
- Broad Band Internet Connection (wired and wireless)
- Phone connection - Each company will pay the rentals and bills.
- Standard Furniture (office only) as decided by AUIIC and University

- Access to Research and development infrastructure or Laboratories (minimal charges applicable as per University regulations wherever required)
- ***Power charges:*** *Bills will be raised against the electricity consumption (including through DG set) by the individual incubatees, as per calculations made by the University.*

- **About University Scientific Instrumentation Centre and facilities**

Instruments have revolutionized how we look at the world and extended the range of our senses. The development of the modern scientific method and its emphasis on testable hypotheses required the ability to make quantitative and ever more accurate measurements. Instrumentation has often been cited as the pacing factor of research; the productivity of researchers is only as great as the tools they have available to observe, measure, and do research. Cutting-edge instruments not only enable new discoveries but help to make the production of knowledge more efficient. Many newly developed instruments are important because they enable us to explore phenomena with more precision and speed. Advanced tools enable scientists to answer increasingly complex questions, and new findings in turn enable the development of more powerful and sometimes novel instruments.

University Science Instrumentation Centre (USIC) was created with the objective to uplift the quality of research in basic as well as applied field of sciences.

The following equipments are available in the University Scientific Instrumentation Center:

1. *Confocal Microscope (ZEISS LSM 800)*
2. *Scanning Electron Microscope (ZEISS EVO LS10)*
3. *High resolution Transmission Microscopy (HRTEM)*
4. *Nuclear magnetic Resonance (NMR)*
5. *Electrochemical workstation for sensor and capacitor characterization*
6. *X-ray Photoelectrospectroscopy (XPS)*
7. *CHN analyser*
8. *Protein purifies sequencer*
9. *Real time PCR devices*
10. *Powder X Ray Diffractometer (Bruker D8 Advanced)*
11. *Inverted fluorescence Microscope (Axio Vert A1- FL-LED, Carl Zeiss)*
12. *CO_2 Incubator (Cell Expert C170, Eppendorf)*
13. *-86^{0}C freezer (CryoCube, Eppendorf)*
14. *Refrigerated Centrifuge (5702 centrifuge, Eppendorf)*
15. *Spectrofluorometer (F-7100, Hitachi)*
16. *Multimode plate reader (Varioskan Lux, Thermo fisher)* with other minor and standard instruments.

- **Mentoring assistance** See website for expertise
(Mandatory: the incubatee may select mentor from the list of experts available in AUIIC web page. Incubatee should pay the fees for mentor).
- **IPR assistance** following the University regulations
- **All Departmental laboratories** with specialized equipment (with prior permission

from the Dept)

- **Business incubation Centre**
- **Conference Halls/Meeting Rooms** (with prior permission and booking from University)

5. Exit: An Incubate will leave the incubator under the following circumstances: Completion of two years' stay (if no extension granted)

- Underperformance or non-viability of business proposition as decided by AUIIC on a case-by-case basis
- Notice of Irresolvable promoters' disputes
- Violation of any policy criteria such as the company enters in an acquisition, merger or amalgamation deal or reorganization deal resulting in a substantial change in the profile of the company, its promoters, directors, shareholders, products or business plan or Any other reason for which AUIIC may find it necessary for an incubate company to leave or notwithstanding anything written elsewhere, AUIIC decision in connection with the exit of an incubate company shall be final and shall not be disputed by any incubate company.

6. Periodic assessment:

a. The venturing startup/incubatee has to submit a yearly audited statement of profit and loss account and an unaudited quarterly statement about the activities. The emphasis of evaluation will be on checking if the milestones specified in the business plan are met.

b. The following stages of assessment may be strictly followed

- Ideation / Innovation stage
- Concept development/ Opportunity spotting
- Product Development
- Market assessment/ Competition analysis
- First level Business Planning/ Business Modeling
- Founding Team
- Intellectual property protection
- Seed Funding
- Pre-Market Stage
- Proof of Concept/ Prototyping
- Product Development and enhancement
- Financial Assistance Required
- Test marketing
- Full scale business planning including production, sales and sourcing
- Implementation Stage
- Full scale Business Planning
- Pitching for Venture Funding
- Scaling up operations
- Large scale commercialization
- Mature Team Formation
- Exit stage
- Going National/ Global

Student Startups Regulations:

- Students / scholars shall be permitted to establish a start-up or working part-time in the start-up that already exists in the University under ‘AUIIC’ while continuing the study.
- Students shall be permitted to earn credits for their curricular requirements depending upon the involvement in the start-up activities. This shall be duly endorsed by the concerned start-up and the ‘AUIIC’.
- Student start-up may be permitted to use the address of the incubator to register the company (start-up) while studying in the University.
- The University may exempt Students involved in the start-ups affiliated with the ‘AUIIC’ to avail a maximum of 50% attendance including claim through ODs, etc. in a semester; or the attendance requirements as per the Academic regulations of the University in vogue.
- Students may be permitted to undertake a semester breakup to work with start-ups affiliated with the ‘AUIIC’, after completion of 4th semester (3 year UG programme) / 8th semester (5 year Integrated programme) / 2nd semester (2 year PG programme) and rejoin the same programme to complete the same with the approval of the University
- For any IPR related issues and any legal infringements pertaining to the start-up, the concerned student(s) involved in the start-up shall be solely responsible.

Faculty Startups regulations:

- Faculty start-up may be owned by a faculty member alone or with students / scholars or with faculty member of other institution or alumni or with other entrepreneurs.
- Interested Faculty / Student / Scholar has to submit an application to the AUIIC for support and assistance. In case of the collaboration with outsiders must be justified suitably by attaching a signed indemnity bond along with the application for scrutiny / approval.
- A faculty may be an owner or co-owner of such start-ups or may play an operational role viz. Technical Advisor / CEO / Manager, etc. with the due permission of the University with the conditions as detailed below:

    i. Faculty member shall clearly distinguish on-going research work at the University from the work at the startup. Faculty member shall not involve research staff or other staff in the activities of the start-up and vice versa.

    ii. Faculty member shall not accept honorarium / salary or gifts from the startup.

    iii. No restrictions on the shares that faculty can hold as long as they do not spend more than 20% of office time on the start-up company in the role and do not compromise in the academic and administrative work / responsibilities.

- In case the faculty holds the executive or managerial role for more than six months in a start-up, he/she shall be on sabbatical / leave without pay / or utilise existing leave as per the norms of the University. Such leave shall be considered as an eligible service for all service benefits including seniority, annual increments, promotion and pension.

- A faculty member can offer consultancy services to the start-ups or avail consultancy / characterisation / testing services from the competent unit of the University. The utilization of the consultancy / characterisation / testing services for the products developed by the start-up shall be as per the norms of the USIC of the University.

- Normally a start-up owned / co-owned by a faculty member shall be incubated by the AUIIC. However, in exceptional cases, if the faculty member wants to incubate outside the University, necessary approval is to be obtained from the University by submitting suitable justifications. Decision of the University shall be final and binding in this case.

- For any IPR related issues and any legal infringements pertaining to the start-up, the concerned faculty member involved in the start-up shall be solely responsible.

- The sabbatical / leave without pay / or utilizing existing leave as per the norms of the University by a faculty member for associating with a start-up venture, the same shall be taken into account as a continuation of service for promotion / pension benefits / any other forms of academic appraisals for the concerned faculty member.

Company Startups regulations:

a. AUIIC will only incubate private companies (other than one-person companies) that are limited by shares and registered under the Companies Act 2013 (referred to as "Eligible Companies"). The Eligible Company must have at least one Indian resident director on its board of directors and cannot be a subsidiary of a public limited company.

b Businesses promoted by full-time degree students at educational institutions are not eligible for incubation if the student holds an executive position within the company. However, businesses where students are serving as promoters are, as long as the student is not actively involved with the business beyond what the institute may allow.

c. Only after submitting a "No Objection Certificate" from the appropriate authority or employer may a company that is promoted by regular or contract government employees be awarded incubation. Nonetheless, businesses that have been marketed as stockholders by government employees are qualified to qualify for incubation.

d A company's application will not be considered for incubation if it intends to administer educational courses and/or training programs, including vocational programs, or if it plans to do so during or after its incubation at the Start-up Incubation and Innovation Center.

e This committee will have the authority to bargain with businesses and industries to transfer technology, including financial ramifications like a one-time grant and a royalty percentage based on the inventor's and university's yearly sales turnover, which will be split 60%:40% as per the AISP.