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Oriental College of Technology, Bhopal

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP CELL (E-CELL) POLICY

1. Preamble

Entrepreneurship education and start-up support provide students with opportunities to develop ideas, build prototypes, understand business requirements and connect with mentors, incubators and funding sources. The Entrepreneurship Cell (E-Cell) of the institution provides a structured platform for innovation, entrepreneurship, mentoring, incubation and start-up support. The Cell supports students through the stages of ideation, pre-incubation, incubation and growth, with appropriate review and documentation.

2. Vision

To build an institutional ecosystem that encourages students to innovate, develop start-ups and create value through entrepreneurial initiatives.

3. Mission

- Nurture an entrepreneurial mindset among students.
- Support the journey from idea development to prototype and start-up.
- Develop linkages with industry, government bodies, mentors, incubators, investors and alumni entrepreneurs.

4. Objectives

- Encourage creativity, innovation and problem-solving.
- Provide training in business planning, finance, intellectual property, marketing and related areas.
- Facilitate idea validation, prototyping, incubation and access to early-stage funding opportunities.
- Organize ideathons, hackathons, bootcamps, business plan competitions, pitch sessions and founders' talks.
- Facilitate student access to Start-up India, MSME, NIDHI and other relevant support schemes.
- Provide structured mentorship and networking opportunities with experts, incubators and entrepreneurs.

5. Governance Structure

The E-Cell shall function through an Advisory Board, Core Team and need-based working committees.

5.1 Advisory Board

- Director / Principal – Chairperson
- Heads of Departments
- Senior industry mentors / alumni entrepreneurs
- Representatives of incubators, as applicable

5.2 Core Team

- E-Cell Faculty Coordinator(s)
- Student President / Vice President
- Marketing and Outreach Lead
- Operations Lead
- Finance Lead
- Innovation Lead
- Event Management Lead

5.3 Working Committees

- Start-up Screening Committee
- Mentor Allotment Committee
- Funding and Evaluation Panel
- IPR Support Unit
- Incubation and Lab Facilities Unit

6. Functions and Support Services

- Awareness and motivation through entrepreneur talks, ideation sessions, bootcamps, E-Summit and start-up expos.
- Skill development through design thinking, Business Model Canvas (BMC), MVP development, pitching, digital marketing, finance and fundraising sessions.
- Mentorship through domain-based mentor allocation, expert sessions, industry interaction and alumni start-up mentoring.
- Incubation support through available workspace, co-working facilities, Wi-Fi, tools, software, prototyping facilities and testing facilities.
- Funding facilitation through information and guidance on institutional grants, government schemes, competitions, angel/VC networks and other appropriate sources.
- IPR and legal guidance covering patent filing, copyright, trademark and relevant documentation.

7. Start-up Life Cycle Support

7.1 Ideation Stage

- Ideation workshops and problem identification.
- Market research and validation support.
- Feasibility assessment of the proposed idea.
- Expected output: validated idea statement and problem–solution fit.

7.2 Pre-Incubation Stage

Indicative duration: 3–6 months.

- Business Model Canvas preparation.
- Prototype design and development.
- Cost estimation and competitive analysis.
- Expected output: Minimum Viable Product (MVP).

7.3 Incubation Stage

Indicative duration: 6–12 months.

- Workspace and access to available technical facilities.
- Mentoring and technical expert support.
- Funding opportunity facilitation.
- IP filing support and networking.
- Market launch guidance

7.4 Growth and Scaling Stage

- Investor-connect and networking sessions.
- Pitch deck refinement.
- Expansion and scaling guidance.
- Government and industry linkages.
- Expected output: functioning start-up with a defined revenue model.

8. Start-up Registration and Screening

Students/start-up teams seeking formal support from the E-Cell shall submit the following for internal registration:

- Idea presentation / pitch deck.
- Problem statement.
- Innovation description.
- Team structure.
- Prototype status.

External registration, where applicable, may include Startup India, MSME (Udyam), company/LLP/partnership registration and GST requirements.

9. Start-up Evaluation

The Start-up Screening / Evaluation Committee shall consider:

- Innovation / uniqueness
- Market potential
- Revenue model feasibility
- Team competency

- Prototype readiness
- Social / industry relevance
- Scalability

Each criterion may be assessed on a 1–5 scale by the designated evaluation committee.

10. Mentorship and Review

- Mentors shall be mapped according to the domain and requirements of the start-up.
- Progress shall be reviewed periodically, including monthly progress review where applicable.
- Mentor feedback and review records shall be maintained.
- Quarterly presentations may be conducted for structured progress review.
- Based on review, the E-Cell may recommend continuation, additional mentoring, prototype support or other appropriate assistance.

11. Funding Support

- The E-Cell shall facilitate awareness and application support for relevant government schemes such as Startup India Seed Fund, MSME innovation support, NIDHI support, DST/AICTE/DRDO grants and Atal Innovation Mission schemes, subject to eligibility and availability.
- Private sources may include angel investors, venture capitalists, CSR support and business competitions.
- Institutional support may include approved mini-grants, prototype funding and student entrepreneurship support, subject to institutional approval and availability.
- Funding recommendations shall follow a transparent screening process and appropriate utilization and reporting requirements.

12. Student Start-up Support

- Attendance flexibility during approved incubation/start-up activities, as permitted by institutional rules.
- Consideration of appropriate flexibility in examination/assignment schedules, subject to academic and regulatory requirements.
- Credit-based recognition for start-up work, where applicable.
- Other academic support may be considered by the competent authority based on the nature and stage of the start-up.

13. IPR and Resource Use

- IPR matters shall be addressed through the E-Cell's IPR support mechanism.
- Where work is fully student-generated without institutional resources, ownership may remain with the student/team, subject to applicable rules and agreements.
- Use of E-Cell and institutional facilities shall be authorized and documented.

14. Documentation and Records

The E-Cell shall maintain, as applicable:

- Start-up proposal forms and budget plans.

- Mentor review reports and feedback sheets.
- Prototype status/testing reports.
- Funding utilization reports.
- Monthly/quarterly progress records and annual E-Cell performance records.

15. Events and Networking

The E-Cell may organize or facilitate:

- Start-up weekends / hackathons
- Ideathons and innovation challenges
- Business plan competitions
- Pitching sessions
- Founders' talk series and bootcamps
- Interaction with industry associations, incubators, government agencies, mentors, investors and alumni entrepreneurs

16. Code of Conduct

- Maintain ethical and professional business practices.
- Avoid plagiarism and unauthorized use of intellectual property.
- Use E-Cell and institutional resources responsibly.
- Maintain professional conduct during mentoring, events and external interactions.
- Submit required reports and participate in scheduled reviews.

17. Monitoring and Outcome Indicators

The E-Cell shall periodically review its activities using indicators such as:

- Number of students trained.
- Number of ideas/start-ups registered.
- Number of prototypes developed.
- Funding received or facilitated.
- Patents filed and products launched.
- Participation in start-up and innovation activities.

18. Policy Review

The E-Cell Policy shall be reviewed periodically by the competent institutional authority to keep the support mechanism aligned with institutional requirements, available facilities and applicable schemes.

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