

# **Industry – Academia Linkage Policy**

## **Bhattadev University, Bajali**

### **Introduction**

Industry-Academia collaboration is crucial as it merges practical expertise and academic rigor, providing organizations with hands-on knowledge and research-driven insights. Such collaborations play a vital role in driving innovation and achieving socio-economic progress. This synergy helps universities commercialize their research and fuels economic growth by fostering innovation and job creation. Academia gains real-life problem-solving opportunities, and students benefit from industry exposure through internships. Such partnerships promote best practices and open new avenues for collaboration, thus enhancing a culture of excellence. They also nurture talent pipelines, preparing the next generation of professionals for industry challenges. On a global scale, countries with robust industry-academia collaborations boast competitive advantages.

Successful in developed countries for decades, India has yet to fully realize their potential. The UGC plays a vital role in promoting these collaborations, requiring a multi-faceted approach to benefit all stakeholders. The UGC's 'Working Group' has proposed measures to enhance industry-academia collaboration in India.

### **Motivation:**

The economy of Bajali District is dominated by the service sector, with the agricultural sector being the other significant contributor. The agricultural sector generates the highest employment in the district. However, the absence of large and heavy industries creates a gap in industrial employment and makes establishing links with industries challenging. Most industries in the district fall within the MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) sector, with no big or heavy industry present. Due to a lack of awareness, many firms do not have DICC registration and are thus categorized in the unorganized sector. Furthermore, the absence of a parent or regulatory body means these enterprises lack coordination, which hinders establishing links with them as a whole. Therefore, Bhattadev University has decided to establish linkages with individual firms rather than the entire industry. This policy focuses on linking with the unorganized sector to enhance employability, entrepreneurship, and knowledge exchange.

### **Objectives:**

The objectives of this policy are:

**1. To enhance Local Employment Opportunities:**

To develop and implement initiatives that create job opportunities for local residents by leveraging industry partnerships and university research.

**2. To promote Sustainable Agricultural Practices:**

To advance agricultural productivity and sustainability by combining academic research with industry expertise, tailored to the specific needs of the rural community.

**3. To improve Rural Healthcare Services:**

To develop innovative healthcare solutions and improve the delivery of medical services in rural areas through collaborative research and practical application.

**4. To support Rural Entrepreneurship:**

To foster a culture of entrepreneurship and support the establishment of local businesses by providing access to industry resources, mentorship, and academic knowledge.

**5. To enhance Educational Opportunities:**

To improve access to quality education and vocational training for rural students, bridging the gap between academic knowledge and industry needs.

**Focused area:**

Here's a deeper dive into each of the focused areas for industry-university collaboration in Bajali District:

**1. Agricultural Sector Enhancement:**

- The agricultural sector is the largest employer in Bajali and its nearby Districts. Industry-university collaboration can introduce innovative farming techniques, sustainable practices, and advanced technologies to boost productivity. Universities can conduct research on crop improvement, pest management, and soil health, providing practical solutions to farmers. For example, our students may learn about advanced agricultural practices from the **Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)** and then impart/transmit the learning outcome to the rural communities.

**2. Support for MSMEs:**

- Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a crucial role in the district's economy. Collaborations can offer these enterprises access to academic research, expert advice, and technological advancements. This support can help MSMEs overcome challenges, improve their processes, and expand their market reach, thereby contributing to economic growth.

**3. Skill Development and Employability:**

- To address the employment gap, industry-university partnerships can focus on training and skill development programs. These initiatives can equip students and local residents with the skills needed by the job market. By aligning educational outcomes with industry demands, these collaborations can enhance employability and reduce unemployment rates.

**4. Entrepreneurship development:**

- Fostering a culture of entrepreneurship is essential for economic development. Industry-university collaboration can provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary resources, mentorship, and support to start and grow their businesses. This includes business incubation, access to funding, and guidance on business planning and strategy.

**5. Knowledge Exchange and Innovation:**

- Effective collaboration between academia and industry facilitates the exchange of knowledge and ideas. This can lead to innovative solutions for local challenges.

Universities can apply their research to real-world problems faced by industries, while industries can provide practical insights and data for academic research. This symbiotic relationship drives innovation and continuous improvement.

#### **6. Fine and performing arts:**

- Bajali being the centre of art, culture and performing arts can provide a good number of internship opportunity to the students. Furthermore, Pathsala being the hub of mobile theatre industry, it offers a unique opportunity to our students to learn various aspects of mobile theatre industry.

#### **6. Healthcare Sector:**

- Bajali district and its nearby areas are rapidly evolving into a healthcare hub. The establishment of numerous pharmacies, diagnostic laboratories, and private nursing homes has significantly increased employment opportunities in this sector.

#### **7. Other possibilities:**

- The hospitality industry in Bajali holds immense potential, driven by the presence of **Barpeta Satra**. The **Manas National Park**, situated at a distance of 40 km, provide learning opportunity about eco-tourism, bio-diversity conservation etc. Bajali has the capability to become a centre for religious and medical tourism. Consequently, the hospitality sector, including hotels, restaurants, and related businesses, presents a promising area for development. The place is also home to some other handicraft industries like the Assamese traditional ornament making, cane and bamboo craft, weaving etc. Horticulture and nurseries is also one sector which can be explored. These will be identified and linkages will be established.

We plan to Establish internship programs with local enterprises to provide students with hands-on experience. We offer expert guidance to local industry stakeholders on sustainable practices, financial literacy, and market access, involving other institutions working in these fields. University will conduct training programs for workers in these sectors to enhance their efficiency and economic stability.

#### **Implementation mechanism:**

##### **1. Industry-Academia Coordination Cell:**

- An Industry-Academia Coordination Cell serves as a bridge between academic institutions and industries to foster collaboration and mutual growth. A dedicated committee to facilitate partnership, organizing events, and monitor progress of internship and other programmes.

##### **2. Develop Collaboration Framework:**

- We have to establishing formal agreements with local industry groups, individual firms, cooperatives, other institutes and NGOs for sustained engagement. For that, we need to create Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) or agreements outlining roles, responsibilities, and expectations for all parties involved.

##### **3. Curriculum Enhancement**

- **Introducing Add-On Courses:** Develop and offer specialized courses that complement the existing curriculum, tailored to meet the specific needs of various industries. These courses will focus on practical skills, emerging technologies, and industry-relevant knowledge to better prepare students for the job market.
- **Organizing Workshops and Seminars:** Host workshops and seminars led by industry professionals, providing students with hands-on experience and insights into real-world applications. These events will cover a range of topics, from technical skills to soft skills, ensuring a well-rounded education.
- **Collaborative Course Development:** Work closely with industry partners to design and update courses that reflect current industry trends and demands. This collaboration ensures that the curriculum remains relevant and up-to-date.

#### 4. Funding & Resource Mobilization

- **Seeking Financial Support:** Actively pursue funding opportunities from government agencies, corporate CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) initiatives, and research grants. This support will be used to enhance academic programs, research projects, and infrastructure.
- **Internal Fund Generation:** Implement strategies to generate funds internally, such as alumni donations, fundraising events, and partnerships with local businesses. These efforts will help sustain and expand university programs and initiatives.
- **Resource Allocation:** Efficiently allocate resources to prioritize high-impact projects and initiatives that align with the university's goals and industry needs.

#### 5. Monitoring & Evaluation

- **Regular Assessment:** Establish a system for continuous monitoring and evaluation of collaborative initiatives and academic programs. This includes collecting feedback from students, faculty, and industry partners to assess the effectiveness and impact of these programs.
- **Alignment with NEP Credit Framework:** Ensure that the evaluation process aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) Credit framework, maintaining consistency with national standards and guidelines. This alignment will help in recognizing and accrediting students' efforts and achievements.
- **Evaluation:** Evaluation will be as per evaluation scheme outlined in the Internship Policy, Bhattadev University.

In conclusion, industry-academia collaboration is a vital mechanism for fostering innovation, driving socio-economic growth, and bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. By focusing on key areas such as skill development, entrepreneurship promotion, and knowledge exchange, industry-academia collaborations can significantly contribute to local economies, particularly in regions like Bajali and its nearby Districts.



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