ACCRA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (ATU-INCOE) POLICY

Contents

SECTION ONE

1.0 DEFINITION OF TERMS

I.   **Engagement:** The act of interacting with stakeholders to produce right decisions and mutually beneficial outcomes for both the University and its stakeholders.

II.   **Local community:** Local populations, public organisations and local authorities.

III. **Social/community engagement system:** A set of detailed, specific and consistent actions that an organisation undertakes in order to engage communities and build collective social benefits.

IV.   **Management:** Executive managers of an organisation, who have the authority to make or materially influence major commercial, financial and personnel decisions within the organisation.

V.   **Policy:** A principle or rule to guide decisions to a desired outcome and is considered to be a 'Statement of Intent' or a 'Commitment' to the course of ATU.

VI.   **Procedure:** A sequence of actions, processes and responsibilities required to achieve ATUs industry and community engagement objectives.

VII. **Guidelines:** Detailed advice on best practices to follow in implementing this policy.

VIII. **Stakeholders:** Parties that have interest in ATU and can either affect or be affected by ATUs activities.

IX.   **Conflict of interest:** A set of circumstances that creates a risk that professional judgment or actions regarding a primary interest is unduly influenced by a secondary interest. Conflicts of interest are a

clash that most often occurs between requirements and interests.

X.   Independence: Is the freedom from conditions that threaten the ability of ATU-INCOE to carry out its responsibilities in an unbiased manner.

XI. Objectivity: Is an unbiased mental attitude that allows entities to perform engagements without compromises on quality.

XII. **ATU**: Accra Technical University

SECTION TWO

2.0 POLICY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Accra Technical University has been engaged with industries and communities for a long time. However, there is no policy to guide its industry and community engagement activities. This has necessitated the development of this policy document to guide its activities in line with the objective of engaging industry and community. The policy outlines the Strategies of Accra Technical University towards Industry and Community engagement. The principles set out in this document will guide our industry and community engagement initiatives in line with ATU's vision of "being recognized as the top Technical University in Ghana with strong regional influence. Industry and community engagement

This Policy document is based on the principles set forth in the following:

- Technical Universities' Act 2016, Act 922;
- Accra Technical University (ATU) Statutes;
- Accra Technical University (ATU) Strategic Plan (2021-2025).

2.2 Policy Statement

Accra Technical University recognizes the need to foster cooperation with Industry and Community as being fundamental to achieving its strategy to serve as a technical and academic resource to industry and community. This Industry and Community Engagement Policy of Accra Technical University (ATU) defines the principles and guidelines for engagement activities with industry and the local community and provides an avenue for building constructive relationships with stakeholders. This policy aims to make a positive contribution to the socio-economic development of the country with particular emphasis on the operational environs of the University.

2.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to strengthen the relationship between ATU and the industry/community, for demand-driven and practically oriented education and training programmes in order to:

(a)   ensure both academic and technical staff acquire the needed competencies and skills to enable them deliver quality teaching research.

(b)   ensure that ATU students acquire employable skills that are responsive to industry/community needs and entrepreneurship development.

The implementation of this Policy will:

- increase access to industrial attachment placement for both staff and students of ATU;

- develop industry driven curriculum

- provide opportunities for students to create workplace networks;

- instill social enterprise spirit in students

- supplement recruitment drives by giving students the opportunity to "sample" careers in a particular industry/community;

- influence young people's career choices;

- promote students' interest in the community;

- contribute to the development of the future workforce;

- deliver real employable skills which benefit industries/communities and students;

- address skills shortages;

- enhance the link between ATU and industry/community in combining theory and practical training; applied research; and technology transfer:

- raise ATU's profile in the community; and

- increase the visibility of the University in attracting quality staff and students.

2.3 Scope of the Policy

The policy shall apply to:

- All staff; (to ensure both academic and technical staff acquire the needed competencies and skills to enable them deliver quality teaching research)

- School/ Faculties

- All Students; (to ensure that ATU students acquire employable skills that are responsive to industry/community needs and entrepreneurship development)

- Industry and Community bodies; and

- Other stakeholders.

2.3 Scope of Activities

- Activities to be considered under the ATU Industry and Community Engagement Policy are:

- Industrial/ Community Consultations/ Surveys;

- Curriculum Development

- Industrial attachment;

- Community outreach;

- Networking with businesses and relevant industry bodies;

- Training for industry/community ;

- Selection of ATU/industry/community representatives in advisory Relevant offices and/or reference groups;

- Corporate Social Responsibility (Refer to the ATU Corporate Social Responsibility Policy)

SECTION THREE:

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

3.0 Commitments and Provisions of Community and Industry Engagement

The University would;

- comply with all the applicable local laws and regulations on industry and community engagement not excluding rules and regulations for ATU;

- establish and maintain constructive relationships with industry and local communities by signing an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU);

- improve quality of life of local communities and drive socio-economic development, taking real needs and materiality into account;

- contribute to a healthy and safe environment in which communities can live and work;

- respect human rights.

3.1 Principles of Community and Industry Engagement

This Policy shall be:

- consistent with the mandate, vision, and mission of Accra Technical University;

- in alignment with national and international laws, Technical Universities act and other relevant regulations;

- in observance of the procedures of the policy and be mandatory

for all categories of persons in the scope;

- implemented impartially without prejudice to anyone for all activities both on and off campus.

3.2. Guidelines of Community and Industry Engagement

ATU shall;

- learn about the Industry and Community to be engaged: its culture, economic conditions, social networks, political and power structures, values, demographic trends and history of previous engagement with other organisations.
- set clear goals for each Industry and Community Engagement activity.
- visit Industry and Community to establish relationships, build trust and work with the formal and informal leadership.
- seek commitment from industry and community leaders in creating a process for engagement.
- promote community self-determination and ownership of initiatives.
- recognise and respect the diversity in Industry and Community Engagement.

3.3 Other Guidelines

3.3.1 Manage Expectations

ATU is not oblivious of the fact that communities, especially the poor, usually have high expectations of institutions that commit to helping them in one way or the other. Where these expectations are not met, communities become disappointed, and relationships are affected.

ATU, therefore, has a responsibility to manage the expectations of the industries and communities it relates with. In this regard, promises made to the industries and communities in any engagement endeavour, should be realistic and measurable. ATU holds that, it is preferable to promise less and deliver more than to promise more and deliver less.

3.3.2 Clearly Delineate Roles, Responsibilities and Mandate

Every engagement endeavour should be documented with clearly assigned roles and timelines. The community leaders or those involved should understand their responsibilities, accept them, and clearly show that they are committed to abiding by their side of the bargain. On the other hand, ATU must clearly state its responsibilities and officers assigned to play various roles.

3.3.3 Professionalism

ATU commits itself to acting in utmost good faith in all dealings with the industries and communities it engages. In exhibiting utmost good faith, staff of ATU must uphold high standards of integrity and honesty. ATU staff must possess professional knowledge and skill, and exhibit same when they undertake community engagement exercises. Appropriate code of conduct to reflect professionalism is therefore encouraged.

3.3.4 Regular and Accessible Communication

ATU commits to operating within the boundaries of clearly defined lines of communication. For all engagement programmes and projects, a focal person must be informed of all aspects of the engagement/programme. If there are changes during the implementation process, they must be

properly communicated and expectations well managed. Information flow should be regular, formal, and properly documented. All meetings must have minutes taken. Memos must be properly generated and signed. The focal person or persons within the community must be encouraged to communicate formally. This will help avoid a situation where one party says "I told you" and the other says "You did not."

3.3.5 Confidentiality and Anonymity

ATU staff shall commit themselves to uphold confidentiality and anonymity in all cases where privileged information is provided by a community member(s). Respect for the wishes and privacy of community members is necessary, to gain their trust.

3.3.6 Transparency and Access to Information

ATU may execute community engagement projects alone, or in collaboration with third parties. In the case of a collaboration with a third party in the execution of a project, ATU commits to be transparent with information regarding all contributions of the third party, be it financial or otherwise, and to provide unimpeded access to the said information to maintain a healthy relationship with partners and the community.

3.3.7 Interdisciplinary and Enriched Problem-solving Collaboration

ATU-INCOE shall promote interdisciplinary collaboration to produce integrated views by:

- defining collaboration and the expected output

- considering, accepting and adopting/adapting the contributions by stakeholders

3.3.8 Avoidance of Conflicts of Interest

ATU staff shall avoid all conflict of interest issues in its engagement with industry and community. Where there are any known conflict of interest issues, such should be disclosed. Transparency and accountability would be ensured to eliminate either the perceived or actual conflict of interest in the engagement process.

3.3.9 Continuity and Longevity

ATU is committed to the engagement course and would ensure the continuity and longevity of the relationships and engagement. The collaboration is meant to be a longstanding relationship with collective interests and responsibilities. ATU would, however, with advance notice, exit all unfruitful engagements.

3.3.10 Maintenance of Objectivity and Independence

To achieve the degree of independence necessary to effectively carry out its responsibilities, ATU-INCOE and its functionaries would seek direct and unrestricted access to senior management. ATU-INCOE strives to maintain its objectivity and independence at all times and to act in a manner that creates a perception of being objective and independent. ATU-INCOE would carefully consider the impact of its actions on the University and its stakeholders, in an objective and independent manner.

3.3.11 Compliance with Rules of Engagement

In enhancing compliance with the norms of engagement, ATU-INCOE would ensure that stakeholders are aware of their obligations in the collaboration. All stakeholders would be encouraged to respect the rules of engagement in accordance with stated norms and practices

SECTION FOUR: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

of engagement. Engagement with stakeholders would occur within the value chain so as to ensure commitment at all levels.

4.1 Policy Implementation Priorities

ATU prioritises the following activities when engaging with Industry and communities:

I.   Implementing and maintaining an effective industry and community engagement system;

II.   Identifying relevant industries and beneficiary communities, analysing their interests and concerns in the policy implementation;

III.   Implementing and maintaining a feedback system;

IV.   Maintaining a functioning social engagement system in forms that reflect the concerns and priorities of industries, local communities and ATU.

V.   Parties to the collaboration must be legally registered and/or regulated

4.2 Policy Implementation Procedure

4.2.1   The committee would undertake informal industry and community engagement to gather sufficient information to inform the development of roadmaps for formal engagement.

4.2.2   The committee relevant office would request for relevant and independent industry and community representative(s) to participate in

formal industry and community engagement process.

4.2.3   Relevant office would provide the representatives with all relevant information and documentation regarding a proposed activity.

4.2.4   The Relevant office would collate all relevant information relating to a proposed activity.

4.2.5   The Relevant office would contact the industry and community representatives directly to invite them to participate in the industry engagement process.

4.2.6   The industry and community engagement activity may take place face-to-face with University staff or may take place remotely.

4.2.7   Relevant office writes proposal on the engagement to be presented to the University authority for consideration.
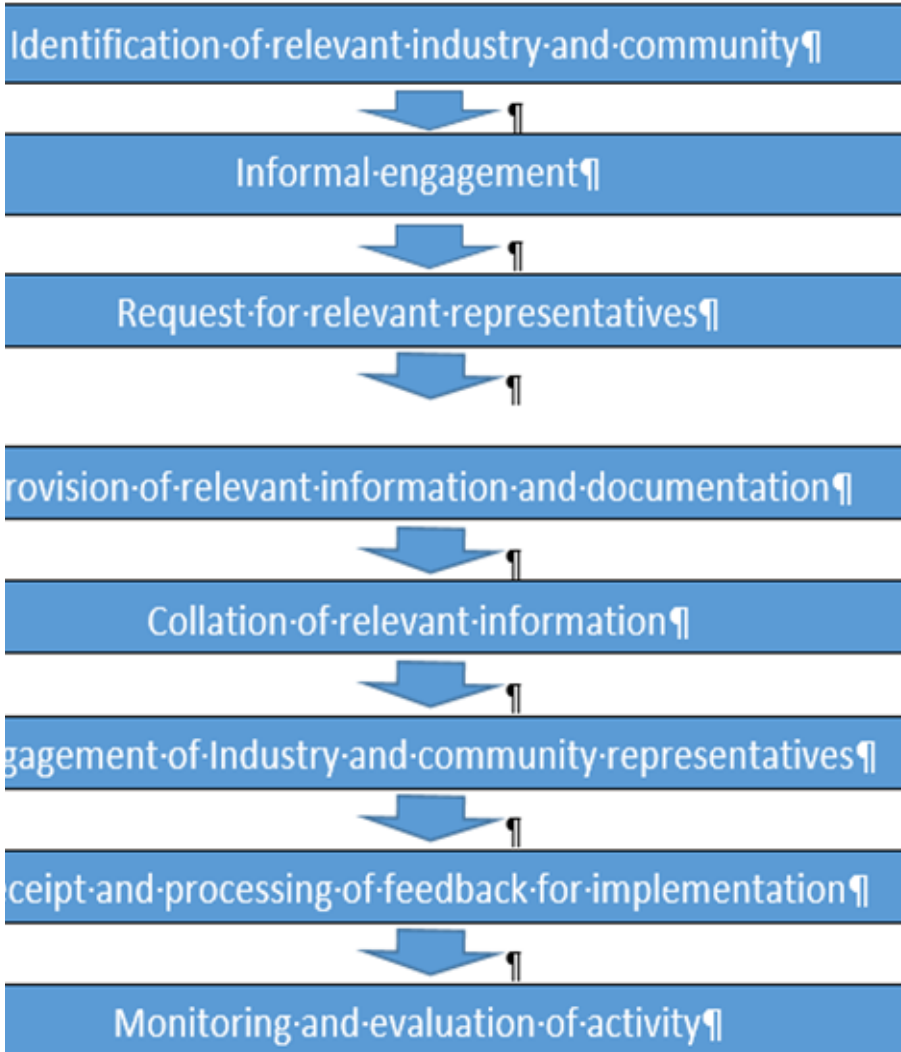
4.2.8   The University authority would develop strategies, practices and resource allocation for implementation upon receipt and consideration of the approved proposal

4.2.9   The relevant office would be responsible for implementing the required changes to a proposed activity and its associated documentations.

4.2.10 The Relevant office Faculty(ies), Department(s)/Unit(s) involved would keep records of outcomes of each implementation activity for informed future engagement decisions.

Stages of Implementation

Stages of Implementation

Identification·of·relevant·industry·and·community¶

Informal·engagement¶

Request·for·relevant·representatives¶

rovision·of·relevant·information·and·documentation¶

Collation·of·relevant·information¶

gagement·of·Industry·and·community·representatives¶

ceipt·and·processing·of·feedback·for·implementation¶

Monitoring·and·evaluation·of·activity¶

Implementation Process

ACTIVITY	SUB- ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
a. Identification of relevant industries and communities	ii. Identification of relevant industries and communities through any of the following methods: a. Identification of related industries or communities. b. Invitation from the industry or community. c. Referral from another industry or community. d. Identification of an issue within an industry or community. ii. Evaluation of the industry or community's commitment to the partnership (i.e., interests and expectations; compatibility of objectives; readiness for partnership; and capacity for collaboration). iii. Establishment of areas of cooperation with the industry or community and identification of responsibilities of ATU and the industry or community-based organization.	ATU INCOE/ Faculties/ Directorates

b. Informal engagement	i. Preliminary dialogue with	ATU INCOE/ Faculties/ Directorates
	a. Industry experts or leadership of the organisations to be engaged.	
	b. Local grassroots organisation e.g., a church, school, associations or clubs based within the community to be engaged.	
	c. Experts, leadership and/or regulators of identified industries.	
	d. Traditional/ opinion leaders of identified communities.	
	ii. Identification of access points to industry and community.	
	iii. Establishing rapport to know the communities and vice versa.	

c. Request for relevant representatives	i. Identification of appropriate Industry Representatives such as; a. Employees/CEOs b. General / Line managers c. Heads of relevant departments d. Trainers and Assessors e. Industry experts and regulators f. Industry skills councils or related bodies g. Industry Consultants h. Industry Associations and Unions i. Any other persons who are connected in any way with our company of choice and who can connect ATU with the company. ii. Identification of appropriate community representatives to be engaged such as: a. Traditional rulers b. Opinion leaders c. Mayors/municipal/district chief executives Individuals who will in one way or the other be affected by ATU INCOE activities.	ATU INCOE/ Faculties/ Directorates

d. Provision of relevant information and documentation	i. Information would be collected from and on identifiable stakeholders in relation to the industry and community in which the university intends to engage. ii. Information to be collected includes but not limited to: a. Manpower needs of industry b. Relevant industry related research c. Community education needs d. Social/ developmental needs of the community	ATU INCOE/ Faculties/ Directorates
e. Collation of relevant information	i. Conferring with the appropriate representatives and stakeholders, to verify the information gathered. ii. Determining all relevant information for engaging with industry and community.	

| f. Engagement of industry and community | i. ATU shall adopt any of the following industry and Community Engagement Approaches (CEA):
a. The participatory approach: ATU would work together with industry and communities to empower them with knowledge to address their own problems. This would be done by creating learning opportunities e.g., awareness raising, training, seminars and skills acquisition.
b. Welfare Approach: addressing immediate industry and community and vulnerable group needs. Example eliciting responses to the immediate needs of people such as food, clothing, health services and educational needs.
Engagement would be done through any of the following methods:
a. Face to face interviews
b. Work site visits
c. Participation in worksite meetings
d. Telephone / conference call conversations
e. Group discussions
f. Email broadcasts
g. Electronic surveys
h. Participation with industry bodies
i. Feedback forms
j. Guest speakers
k. Part-time Lecturers | ATU INCOE/ Faculties/ Directorates |

g. Receipt and processing of feedbacks for implementation	i. Quarterly/ semi-annual collection of feedbacks	ATU INCOE/ Faculties/ Directorates
	ii. Discussion of feedbacks (seeking clarifications)	
	iii. Incorporation of applicable feedbacks into the implementation plans	
	iv. Communication of how the feedbacks have been acted upon/implemented	
	v. Evaluation of impacts of the feedbacks	

h. Evaluation of activities	Each ATU-INCOE activity shall be evaluated based on the following	ATU INCOE/ Faculties/ Directorates
	i. Objectives well defined	
	ii. Activities clearly defined	
	iii. Means of verification stated	
	iv. Verifiable indicators stated and defined	
	v. Responsibility assignment	
	vi. Timelines set if applicable	
	vii. Financial statement	