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IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK STUDENT COMMUNITY SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERING CENTRE

UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS, INDIA

Integrating Talent Development into Innovation Ecosystems in Higher Education

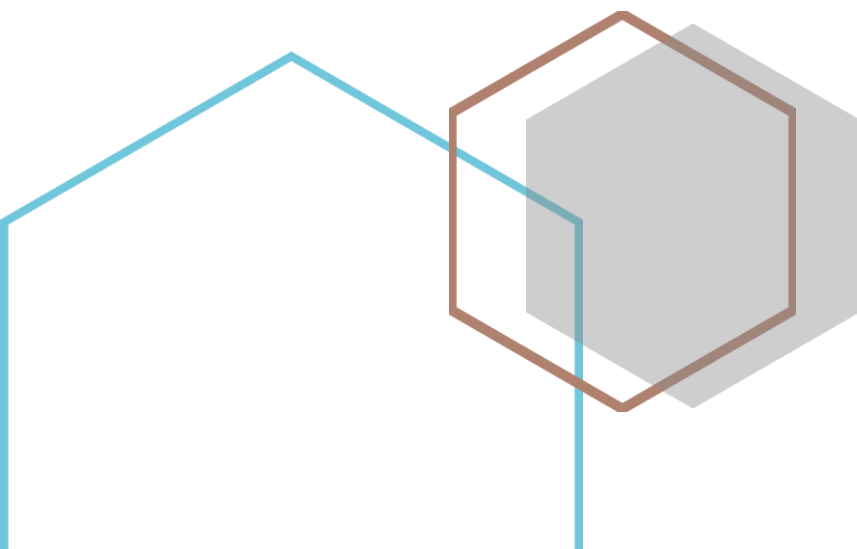




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The framework outlines the design of the operations of the Student Community Service and Volunteering Centre created at the University in the frame of the INNOTAL project. It clarifies its place in the University structure, its activities and management, as well as applicable rules and regulations.



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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

ACTIVITIES OF THE CENTRE

The National Service Scheme (NSS), University of Madras was established by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India, with the primary objective of developing the personality and character of the students through voluntary community service. NSS student volunteers are closely working with rural and slum communities, undertake various kinds of activities relevant to the needs of the community and society.

The establishment of a Student Community Service and Volunteering Centre at University of Madras under the INNOTAL Project will encourage the student volunteers to take up activities related to skills development. It will also raise awareness about Flagship Programmes of the Government such as Digital India, Skill India, and Entrepreneurship Skill Development.

The volunteers engaged in activities in the centre will reach outside the university and visit rural and slum areas and various schools to motivate community youth for self-employment, start-up, and micro-financing, and to impart entrepreneurial skills and innovative ideas to start projects at micro-level. Student volunteers will also work to raise awareness and teach skills on the local vernacular (Tamil) language to the socially backward communities.

The Centre will also organize activities such as camps, hands-on skills oriented training and brainstorming sessions with external stakeholders and mentors.

POSITION OF THE CENTRE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY STRUCTURE

In the short-term, the Student Community Service and Volunteering Centres will be attached to the Talent Co-creation Lab, which will be functioning within the HRDC Computer Networking Centre. In the long run, however, the objective is to link it with NSS and the University Students Advisory Bureau (USAB).

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTRE

As per the University policies on research labs and projects, the INNOTAL Project Manager will be responsible for management during the lifetime of the project. The University usually permits the Principal Investigators to continue managing newly created structures even after the project over. However, an appropriate Committee will be formed to oversee the functioning of the Centre, and it will involve faculty members, external stakeholders and students. This Committee must get the approval of the University Authorities.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR INVOLVEMENT OF FACULTY AND STAFF IN THE CENTRE

A brief circular/notification will be sent to all faculty members by describing the objectives, functioning and services of the centre. Its purpose is to motivate the academic staff to jointly work with the Centre for the benefit of students. Participating faculty members will receive participation certificates that recognize their service and can be used to strengthen their career development. University faculty and staff will be enrolled on a volunteer basis and their service will be recognised by the Centre with due respect.



ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COORDINATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE WORK IN THE CENTRE – STAFF, RESPONSIBILITIES, FINANCING

CHANNELS AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

PROMOTIONAL AND AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES AND INCENTIVES FOR ENCOURAGING STUDENT VOLUNTEERING

RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE SELECTION AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS IN VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Currently, many faculty members are showing interest and working with the INNOTAL team to strengthen the Centre.

The Centre will initially be managed by the INNOTAL Project team members. Later on, it will be linked with related University centres like NSS, the University Students Advisory Bureau (USAB) and the Entrepreneurship & Career Hub Centre. After the project tenure, the Management Committee will recommend to the University authorities to continue the services and facilities of the Student Community Service and Volunteering Centre with the financial support from the University.

The Student Community Service and Volunteering Centre will establish communication with external stakeholders by extending invitations to them to attend events and meetings, to act as resource persons and to train the faculty members and students. More than 10 external stakeholders, who have attended the INNOTAL External Stakeholders workshop at our University, are already engaged in sharing their ideas and training the teachers and students.

The Committee that will oversee the activities of the Centre will include external stakeholders. It will be a major channel of consulting the Centre activities and action plans with these stakeholders.

Students will be encouraged to join the activities of the Centre. The promotion campaign will stress that engagement in volunteering helps students develop leadership skills and social responsibility. All participating students will receive participation certificates. Some students will be chosen to act as mentors to other students. A Best Performer award will be given to student volunteers that have demonstrated outstanding service.

To get recognition and exposure, the Centre will also conduct awareness programmes for public organisations like the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Government of India.

University rules and regulations for the selection and participation of students in volunteering and community service, NSS guidelines, Swachh Bharat Mission or Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and other volunteering organisations' rules and regulations will be followed when selecting students for participation in Centre activities.



RULES FOR LINKING VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The Centre will facilitate the students to share their skills and knowledge with others. The students can join hands with other volunteering services such as Madras School of Social Work (MSSW), Business Youth Starting Together (BYST), and NGOs that are engaged in community services for skills development. At the same time, students will develop many transversal skills themselves. The Centre will seek to select volunteering opportunities that are best suited to develop employability skills.

In addition, the Center, along with the University Students Advisory Bureau and the Student Amenity Centre, will design and deliver skills development programmes like communication skills, preparing applications, writing CV and presentation of skills for employment. This would enable the participating students to use the volunteering experience to their advantage when looking for a job.

The effectiveness of volunteering activities in terms of skills development will be assessed by feedback collection (e.g. a survey) in which the students will be asked to reflect on the impact of the volunteering activities on their skills.

RULES FOR ENSURING THE SAFETY OF STUDENTS ENGAGED IN VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED BY THE CENTRE

The Centre will adopt the existing NSS safety guidelines for students. Volunteers will receive 10-hour First Aid training. The disaster rules and regulations of State Disaster Management will be followed. In addition, COVID-19 rules and guidelines will be strictly followed.

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF THE STUDENT VOLUNTEERING CENTRE

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- Integrating the activities of the Centre with other initiatives and activities focused on the promotion of graduates' employability
 - Integrating the activities of the Centre with the initiatives and activities of the University Student Amenity Centre and NSS
 - Organising subject specific needs-based skill development programmes that involve a large number of students
 - Designing and developing a soft-skills course on community engagement
 - Organizing brainstorming sessions with external stakeholders
 - Designing a Social Entrepreneurship Program in collaboration with Madras School of Social Work
 - Designing and delivering capacity building for physically challenged people
 - Collaborating with Women Self-Help Group, Business Youth Starting Together (BYST), and NGOs
 - Designing and delivering a motivation and entrepreneurial skill training programmes in the local vernacular language (Tamil) for rural and slum communities.



QUALITY ASSURANCE
PLANS

The following preliminary Quality Assurance plan has been made:



Type of assessment	Who will be in charge?	How will assessment activities be organized?	Who will collect the results from the monitoring activities?	Who will analyse the result from the monitoring activities?	What indicators will be used? What elements of the work of the Centre will be monitored?	How will results be reflected in planning?
Monitoring: ongoing, focused on implementation	Project Manager/ Leader	Self-assessment by students Feedback collection or surveys Group discussion	Faculty representatives and involved students	Faculty members concern NSS Coordinator	Number of students involved in voluntary activities Number of external stakeholders involved in/benefitting from the activities Number of faculty members participating in the activities	The results will be used to inform further development of the Centre's activities
Evaluation: Periodic (e.g. once a semester or once a year)	Once per semester	Management Committee	Faculty representatives and involved students	Management Committee members	Assessment of the skills and competencies developed by the students during services. The impact of volunteering on the following skills will be assessed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to work in a group - Problem solving - Awareness of socio-cultural issues - Problem solving - Ability for collaborative work and participation in local life - Meeting deadlines - Awareness of community needs 	The evaluation will be used to design needs-based skills training and long-term capacity building programs