



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
INSTITUTIONAL OFFICE

®

Rules for the Innovation Awards for researcher/s and staff members at the NWU

Reference number	10P/10.6
Accountable executive manager	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Technology
Policy owner	Chief Director: Technology Transfer and Innovation Support
Responsible division	Technology Transfer and Innovation Support
Status	Approved
Approved by	Council
Date of approval	November 2016
Amendments	None
Date of amendments	
Next Review date	2019
Web address of this policy	http://www.nwu.ac.za/content/policy_rules
Address on the policy data base	(10935746) H:\HSC\2. Management\2.1.3 Policy management\Beleide\Raad November 2016\10P-10.6_Rules for innovation awards_eng.docm



Innovation Awards for researcher/s and staff members at the NWU

1 Background

The NWU has for a number of years recognised Innovation by making the following annual Vice Chancellor's awards:

- a) Top Inventor (s)
- b) Top Technology Innovator(s)
- c) most innovative contribution towards improving NWU's management systems, functioning or performance.

The Technology Transfer Office has since suggested a number of additional categories, for which the first awards were made in 2015.

This document consolidates the old and new Awards and their respective criteria.

2 Definitions and terms

- a) Invention: It is a novel and useful idea relating to processes, machines, manufactures, and compositions of matter. It may cover such things as new or improved devices, systems, circuits, chemical compounds, mixtures, software etc.
 - The term "invention" also includes all inventions to the extent where they have not been patented or registered, but rather acquire protection as confidential knowledge.
 - A discovery is not an invention.
 - It is probable that an invention has been made when something new and useful has been conceived or developed, or when unusual, unexpected, or non-obvious results have been obtained and can be exploited.
 - An invention may be the product of a single individual, or a group of individuals who have collaborated on a project.
 - An invention must have commercial or social value
 - We recognise proprietary software as an invention for purposes of these Awards.
- b) A granted patent is the final and absolute acknowledgement that an invention has passed the requirements of a country's examination.
- c) Examination authority: Some countries, e.g. South Africa, accept patents without a thorough examination by experts. The novelty or non-obviousness of such may be difficult to defend in court.
- d) Innovation spans four phases and is not completed until the invention is applied either for profit or social benefit:
 - Inventing or creating a solution for a practical or commercial problem - *research*
 - Demonstrating the functional viability of the solution or invention - *prototyping*
 - Industrialisation, i.e. to prepare the product or technology for the market – *system engineering*
 - To prepare the market for the product or technology – *marketing and commercialisation*
- e) Partnerships/alliances relate to formal joint ventures or collaborative agreements with funding sources, reputable research institutes or commercial partners.
- f) Reference to a year, with reference to criteria for a particular award, refers to the 12 months preceding the deadline for nominations.

3 Panel of adjudicators

The panel for evaluating applications for the various awards may, at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-chancellor: Research, Innovation, Technology, be constituted as follows:

- The Deputy Vice-chancellor: Research, Innovation, Technology
- Director: Technology Transfer and Innovation Support
- IPR and contracting manager
- Relevant Deans and Ad-hoc specialists nominated by the panel if required

4 How to be a contender

a) own entry: Interested persons (individuals or small groups) may decide in which category they want to enter and must submit a cryptic written or electronic document. The submissions must only describe their performance in the category for which they are entering (against the criteria indicated in this document). Entries for more than one category will be acceptable.

b) nominations: any full time employee of the NWU may nominate an individual or group of persons for one or more of the Award categories

The submissions or nominations must reach the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support office on or before the date indicated on the NWU website and or other communication mediums.

Criteria:

Award 1: Top inventor/s

Minimum requirements for this award:

- The staff member/s must at least have one internationally granted patent in at least one country with an examination authority – typically the USA, Europe and Australia.

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Number of inventions by inventor (or same group of inventors) over the last three years, protected by internationally granted patents.	20
Patents granted in US, Europe, UK or Japan	15
Long-term potential of these patents for new or enhanced research platform (depth of innovation)	10
Number of formal, international, collaborative research agreements or alliances as a direct result of the patents	10
Number and caliber of of formal commercialisation agreements as a direct result of the patents	10
Commercial/ social value of the invention in terms of commercialisation	20
International conference papers, proceedings and articles based on these patents	5
Potential for socio-economic and/or community impact	10

Notes:

- This Award measures and recognises a 3-year cycle of achievement. Recipients will not qualify for re-nomination in a subsequent year without having produced new inventions since the previous Award, in which case only new inventions will be recognised.
- Work which has been accepted for previous awards will not be allowed in the next cycle.

Award 2: Top Technology Innovator/s

Minimum requirements for this award:

- The staff member or group must have established at least one innovative development (preferably an internationally granted patent or software), a business unit or research platform.
- The person must be actively involved, or assisting the Technology Transfer Office, in the creation and implementing of the innovative idea.

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Number of international granted patents (or software programmes) over the last three years, up to and including August of the year of the award (validity)	15%
Third- and/or fifth-stream income generated	35%
Potential for spin-offs, products, services or offerings, licensing agreements etc	15%
International recognition or reward/s	10%
Level of commitment to the commercialisation process	10%
Impact on SA's socio-economics	5%
New international partnerships or alliances for NWU	5%
Joint venture companies with industry	5%

Notes:

- a) This Award measures and recognises a 3-year cycle of achievement. Recipients will not qualify for re-nomination in a subsequent year without having produced new inventions since the previous Award, in which case only new inventions will be recognised.
- b) Work which has been accepted for previous awards will not be allowed in the next cycle.

Award 3: The most innovative contribution towards improving NWU's management systems, functioning or performance

Any staff member who made a significant positive impact on the NWU's performance during the last year

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Improvement of any of the performance yardsticks of NWU	30%
Savings in operational costs	30%
Improvement in the time span of any process	20%
Positive impact on the NWU's image	20%

Notes:

- a) This Award measures and recognises a 3-year cycle of achievement. Recipients will not qualify for re-nomination in a subsequent year without having produced new inventions since the previous Award, in which case only new inventions will be recognised.
- b) Work which has been accepted for previous awards will not be allowed in the next cycle.
- c) Awards will only be made if qualifying entries were received.

Award 4: The most promising new declaration

The declaration of a new invention by an employee or post-doctoral fellow, which, in the view of the panel, has the most promise to make significant impact on the economics and social impact in one or more industries of application.

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Patentability	10%
Scope and magnitude of potential commercial impact	40%
Scope and magnitude of potential social impact	30%
Likelihood of popular international acclaim	20%

Award 5: The Researcher with the most new declarations

The Researcher who has filed the largest number of declarations with the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Records of the Chief Director: Technology Transfer and Innovation Support	100%

Notes:

- a) The declared inventions must be reasonably capable of being patented in the view of the Chief Director: Technology Transfer and Innovation Support

Award 6: The Research Unit with the most new declarations

The Research Unit which has collectively filed the most declarations with the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Records of the Chief Director: Technology Transfer and Innovation Support	100%

Award 7: The highest revenue earner for the year

The invention that earned the most revenue for the NWU in the year under review

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Records of the Chief Director: Technology Transfer and Innovation Support	100%

Note: The recipients of the Award may be:

- a) one or more inventor(s) employed by the NWU;
- b) a company in which the NWU is a shareholder; or
- c) an internal ventures/ business units (internal corporate ventures)

Award 8: Commercialisation transaction of the year

Most promising commercialisation transaction concluded (legal documents signed) by the NWU during the year under review

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Equity and/or royalty positions for the NWU	30%
Potential NWU earnings over the next 10 years	20%
Strength and reach of commercialisation partner	15%
Likely impact on job creation in SA	15%
Likely economic impact	20%

Award 9: Most promising student idea

Most promising idea of a student, or group of students where

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Novelty of idea	25%
Scope of potential commercial application	25%
Likely impact on job creation in SA	25%
Likely economic impact	25%

Notes:

- a) 50% or more of the students are registered at the NWU.

Award 10: New Student Business

The most promising student owned and managed business, of which:

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Doing business off-campus	20%
Doing business on campus	5%
Novelty of idea	15%
Green, energy saving or job creation	20%
Scalability beyond student market	10%
Academic results of NWU student(s) involved	30%

Notes:

- b) The business must be in existence for a period of between 1 and 3 years;
- c) All of the owner-managers must be students, and 50% or more must be students at the NWU
- d) Management Accounts must be available.
- e) Must be profitable in last year.

Award 11: International Success

Projects and spin-out businesses (in which the NWU holds equity) who have made demonstrable successes with sales into SADC and internationally

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Exports sales values as per company auditors	50%
International research/commercial collaboration	25%
International public relations benefits (NEWS)	25%

Note: multiple awards are possible

Award 12: Innovation Evangelist

Employees and/or students who are recognised for their consistent and persistent campaigning for the necessity and importance of innovation within industry and the university environment

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Impact/reach of campaigning	30%
Assessment by panel	70%

Note: multiple awards are possible
 Panel to decide on qualifying minimum

Award 13: Exceptional Innovation Project

A NWU project of high calibre and which brings significant attention to the NWU.

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Technical sophistication	15%
External funds raised	20%
Media coverage	25%
Green, energy saving or job creation	10%
Student involvement	10%
National and/ or global achievements	20%

Note: multiple awards are possible

Award 14: Exceptional Incubation Project

A NWU incubation project of high calibre.

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Structured Incubation services provided	15%
Accommodating NWU students, employees and spin-outs	15%
Accommodating external entrepreneurs	15%
External funding	20%
Other external recognition	20%
Focus on women, rural youth and/ or people with disabilities	15%

Award 15: International recognition

Researcher(s) or student(s) who have been awarded recognition by a recognised international forum or competition for an invention or display of innovative traits, in a process of ranking or competitive adjudication.

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Documentary proof/ certification of award(s)	100%

Note: Multiple awards are possible

Award 16: Recognition under the TIA Leaders in Innovation Programme

Researcher(s) or student(s) who have been selected by the Technology Innovation Agency of the Department of Science and Technology as Leaders in Innovation.

Evaluation criteria	Weight
Records of the Chief Director: Technology Transfer and Innovation Support	100%

Note: Multiple awards are possible

Original details: (10935746) H:\HSC\2. Management\2.1.3 Policy management\Beleide\Raad November 2016\10P-10.6_Rules for innovation awards_eng.docm
 17 January 2017

File reference: 10P/10.6