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Tashkent, Uzbekistan

UNCTAD STI Park Development Project

Concept note: Multi-Stakeholder Workshop on the Roadmap to Support STI Parks in Uzbekistan

Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognises that Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) are critical drivers of economic transformation, enabling sustainable development and global competitiveness. In this context, STI parks play a crucial role by fostering technology diffusion, enhancing innovation capacity and promoting industry-academia collaboration.

However, experience has shown that many STI parks in developing countries face challenges in achieving their developmental objectives. As highlighted in UNCTAD's Technology and Innovation Report 2018, common barriers include weak governance, lack of strategic alignment with national innovation policies and insufficient linkages between STI parks and key stakeholders, such as universities and the private sector.

Uzbekistan has made progress in promoting STI-based economic growth, with the establishment of STI parks and an increasing emphasis on fostering innovation. However, there is a growing need to strengthen policy frameworks, operational strategies and quality control mechanisms to ensure that STI parks contribute effectively to national development goals.

This workshop is part of UNCTAD's project "Science, Technology and Innovation Parks for Sustainable Development", funded by the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund under the UN Peace and Development Fund. The project promotes South-South cooperation, providing beneficiary countries with opportunities to learn from successful STI park models in other developing economies, particularly in China.

Objective

The Multi-Stakeholder Workshop on STI Parks in Uzbekistan aims to:

- Develop a consensus among the stakeholders on the way forward after the two capacity-building training workshops in China and one in Uzbekistan.
- Develop a draft STI park roadmap and action plan for Uzbekistan, with support from experts and UNCTAD staff, tailored to national priorities and innovation goals.
- Strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships for the success of STI parks in Uzbekistan.
- The workshop will be structured as an interactive event, combining expert presentations, panel discussions and working group sessions. The agenda is designed to provide:

    - Day 1:
        o Elements for successful STI parks to be presented by the experts from China and Sweden
        o Uzbekistan's STI park policies and practices (including financial and non-financial support)
        o Areas for improvement to be identfied by participants and the experts
    - Day 2: Discussions on Uzbekistan's STI park action plan or roadmap on the way forward
    - Day 3 (tentatively half-day): Finalization of the above-mentioned action plan or roadmap.

Participants are expected to engage in exchanging experiences, identifying challenges and proposing solutions to ensure practical and actionable outcomes from this workshop.

Target participants

This multi-stakeholder workshop will bring together: a) policymakers (inlcuding from the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Finance and other relevant government agencies; b) STI park managers, incubator and accelerator operators; c) Industry representatives (such as Industrial Associations); d) Startups and firms in STI parks/incubators/accelerators; e) Women entrepreneurs' Association and Youth entrepreneurs' Association; and f) Academia, researchers and experts engaged in STI-focused policy and STI park development. Participants in catergory b) will include representatives from full-fledged STI parks, technology parks, innovation hubs, incubators, start-up studios, industrial techno parks and special economic zones or free trade zones hosting STI-related activities.

The diverse mix of participants will help develop multi-stakeholder partnerships, which are essential for ensuring the long-term success of STI parks as drivers of innovation-led economic growth in Uzbekistan.

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