

TARGET INITIATIVES



TARGETED INITIATIVES

- a new initiative of the STCU -

Preamble

Technological innovations and its applications are the keys to success in a knowledge-based economy. Obsolescence of scientific equipment in research institutions, lack of investment capital, limited expenditure by the government on R&D, limited options for grant funding and the inherent difficulty of redirecting former weapons scientists has slowed the progress of former Soviet Republics. Whereas the STCU was primarily engaged in the deployment of former weapons scientists, its role is slowly evolving into being the catalyst through which scientific institutions can collaborate to develop and deploy new technologies and / or improve existing products.

Objective

The STCU will work in partnership with key stakeholders to build a stronger more coherent innovation infrastructure aimed at utilizing the expertise of former weapons scientists in areas where the country has distinctive technical competence and are of National priorities.

Approach

- Consult with key stakeholders to determine areas of technical distinctiveness
- Identify institutions / technical teams positioned to take advantage of emerging technologies within the targeted areas
- Work in partnership with key stakeholders to provide financial support for targeted research areas (i.e. use STCU's resources to leverage external investment)
- Provide value-added input in the evaluation of research proposals
- Increase effectiveness of "Innovation System" by fostering national & international networks
- Effectively manage our resources. Create & nurture linkages between STCU and appropriate research institutions

Progress to Date

- Consensus established on areas of national distinctiveness and national priority.
- Verbal agreement with the National Academy of Science (NAS) on establishment of joint initiative to co-fund (50:50) targeted research areas.
- NAS agrees to provide "Host Government concurrence" in record time
- Staff appointed by NAS to work with STCU to finalize terms of "engagement"
- Protocol established (STCU & NAS) for soliciting, evaluating, selecting and co-funding research proposals. Awaiting ratification
- Final details re. co-funding of proposals under discussion
- Canadian scientific reviewers identified and committed to providing value added constructive feedback to scientists / institutes on merits of proposals within 2 – 4 weeks
- Working at securing US and EU scientific reviewers
- Willingness / desire of institutes to "buy in" to the concept of "targeted initiatives" (i.e. multi-disciplinary / multi-institutional projects) established through visits to Kharkiv, Dnepropetrovsk, Odessa, Kiev and Zaporozhye.

Next Steps

- STCU and NAS launch the new program “Targeted Initiatives” (February 2005)
- Invest resources to raise scientists / institutes capabilities through workshops / seminars across Ukraine (e.g. grant writing, sustainability planning, presentation techniques, regulatory compliance etc.)
- Organize workshops to focus the scientific activities in the selected areas (e.g. biotechnology, environmental technologies)
- Invest resources to ensure interaction / linkages between scientists / institutions and international organizations (e.g. CIDA missions) i.e. enhance linkages that promote commercialization
- Demonstrate “value added activity” through the review process
- Work at converting a culture of basic research into a culture of entrepreneurship
- Enhancing profitability and productivity of institutes by focusing on areas of distinctive technical competence with defined market opportunities
- Demonstrate to key stakeholders, (e.g. donor countries, host government, NAS institutes, universities etc.) that the STCU and NAS are able to work cooperatively in the interest of stimulating innovation with the intent of promoting economic development

Expected Outcome

The actions taken will;

- Strengthen institutes / universities that are engaged in the development of knowledge / expertise that underlie the building of a knowledge based economy, in the selected areas (nanotechnologies and nano-materials, environmental technologies)
- Build infrastructure - to facilitate the growth of institutes technical and innovation capabilities (e.g. internet café, UAR Net)
- Enhance institute sustainability by focusing on moving promising technologies from the laboratory to the marketplace (sustainability of institutes)
- Increase institutes understanding and use of competitive intelligence
- Facilitate the development of clusters