



FPE-R&D NEWSLETTER VOL 1.

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A quarterly newsletter of the Directorate for Research and Development of the Federal Polytechnic Ekowe, Bayelsa State



**DR. AGBABIKA,
LUKMAN ADEGOKE**
RECTOR, FED. POLY.
EKOWE.

Welcome to the maiden edition of our quarterly newsletter, stay ahead of the curve with our breakthrough-research news from the Directorate for Research and Development of the Federal Polytechnic Ekowe, Bayelsa State. In this newsletter, we advocate bridging the gap between research and practice, showcasing the most compelling new ideas in research involving staff and students while aligning research with local, national and international priorities. This is the vision and heart beat of the Chief Executive of this great institution, Dr. Agbabiaka Lukman Adegoke, the Rector of the Federal Polytechnic Ekowe. We therefore enjoin you to connect with us in exploring the power of research-driven solutions for a more impactful and sustainable journey in research and academia in our Polytechnic.

FROM THE EDITORIAL

Unlocking Insights for Impact through Research



Dr. Blessing C. Okogbue
Editor-in-Chief/Dir. R & D

The power of ideation can only be seen or felt when translated to actionable knowledge and output that results in development, knowledge advancement and linkages for local content development and nation building. When ideas translate to products, prototypes or entrepreneurial skills for industrial transformation, rural development, curriculum upgrading, up-skilling of manpower, job creation, local and international collaborations for global impact, know that research must have taken place. Research is an essential component in the process of development. It results to advancement of knowledge and innovation which drives development and meaningful change. Research is a 21st century skill that can never go obsolete or outmoded. It is all about an idea that needs to be developed or a problem that need to be solved by making studious enquiries or examinations, investigations or experimentation that aims at discovery, interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws according to Merriam Webster online dictionary. To have a breakthrough research in the current global climate, innovation is key. Innovative research focuses to bring something creative on board. It says there is something new! There is something different that will make the work stand out. Hence, the need to change our style and approach to research from shelving research outputs to product-driven impacts in Federal Polytechnic Ekowe.

Training and Development in FPE

In the recent training workshop conducted, a pre-workshop survey was undertaken to assess the gaps and training needs for the academic staff of the Polytechnic. The results showed that the academic community needs up-skilling in the areas of writing winning grant proposals, researching with artificial intelligence (as a research tool) and disseminating their research findings technically in reports. Thus, the directorate for research & development has planned training workshops to close these gaps and to ensure research skill upgrades within the group.

How much knowledge do you have about grant proposal before now? Categorise it

49 responses

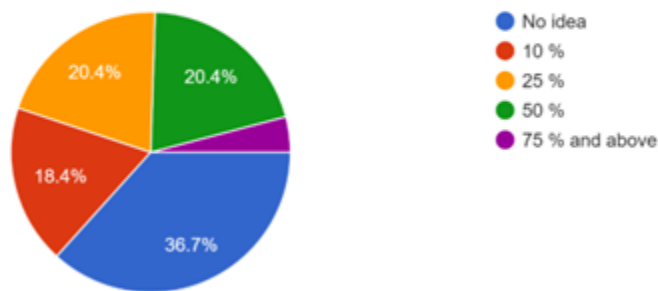


Fig. 1. The chart shows that staff need to know more about proposal writing to access available grants for research.

Only 4.1% of the sampled population has a good grasp in proposal writing and over 36 % do not have an idea (Fig. 1). This is a gap for training (see Fig. 2). Hence, the Directorate recently conducted a workshop on “Research for Impact” focusing on research and proposal writing

From the training objectives, what do you want to learn as your priority learning objective?

49 responses

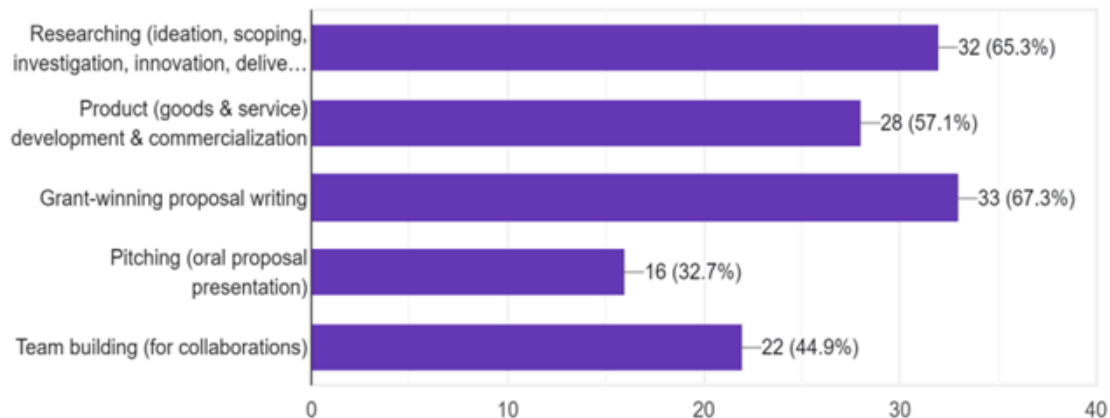


Fig. 2: Pre-training survey showing the training needs and learning objectives of the participants.

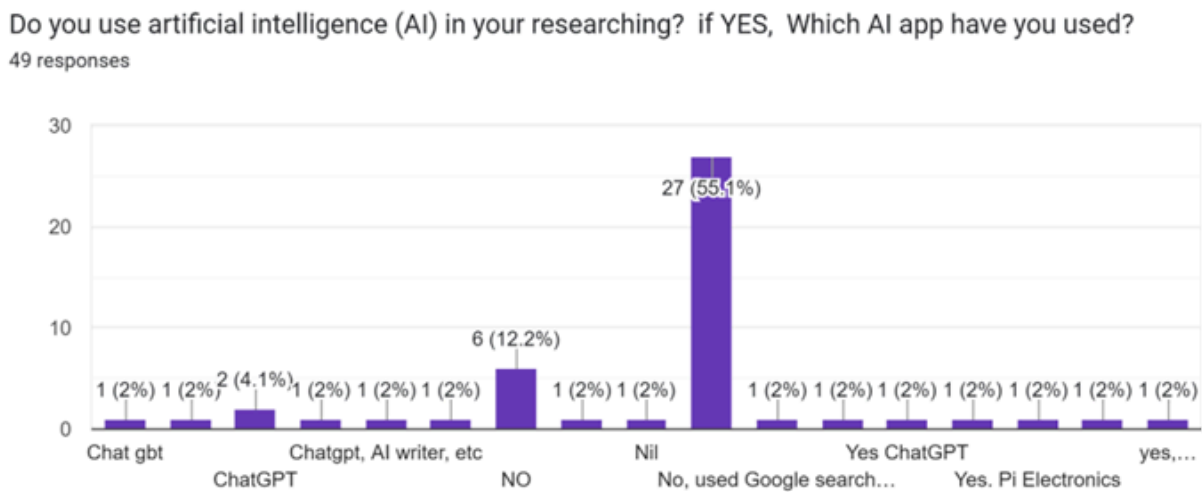


Fig. 3: A survey report showing the awareness on the use of AI research tools in the 21st century researching in FPE.

The above chart projects the low level of awareness in the use of AI in researching among the academic staff with a percentage of over 60% not using this 21st century research tool. Training is also planned towards it for the staff by the directorate.

New face of Research in FPE

Interviews were conducted after the training workshop on Research for Impact in May, 2024 and the feedback shows the impact of the workshop on the academic community of the Polytechnic. The Director for Academic Planning of the Polytechnic, Engr. Digitemie Eteli Innocent shared his view during the interview on the purpose the training was held stating that the training goal was achieved. He also responded by saying that the training focused on setting mindsets on entrepreneurship and innovation in conducting research and the session was an eye opener. Now researchers can go beyond researching to file outputs/findings, and think of development-based research. “So, from the feedback of the participants, the training purpose was achieved and we are hopeful that the approach to research will change in FPE”, he concluded.

Dr. Ngozi Anyanwu, a senior lecturer in the Centre for General Studies also agreed that the training programme was impactful. She emphasized saying, “this is one of the training I really enjoyed as an academic. I have learned a lot and my eyes have opened to do research that will impact the society and not just to do research that will end up on the shelves but will solve problems in the society, she stressed.

The convener and the Director for Research and Development of the Polytechnic, Dr. Blessing Okogbue, responded to her interview on why she organized the training by stating categorically that, “there is the need to close the gap between the industry and the academia. She said, “You have to sensitize the people and change starts from the mind. If we research with innovation and entrepreneurship in our minds, our

outputs will be useful to society. For example, as agriculturists, the farmers need our research outputs to improve farming systems, as engineers they need our equipment fabrications for mechanization, and so on. We are tired of importations in Nigeria and it is not helping our economy, we need to consider local content development. So this training aimed to sensitize the audience and it is the way to start. Mind transformation and repositioning for meaningful societal contributions through research is key to local content development and knowledge advancement for any nation to grow. So from this training, I believe our people have been sensitized and a lot is going to change regarding our research focus and approach”.



A session with students



A session with academic staff

Mentoring and Collaborations

The academic staff of the Polytechnic are enjoined to form research teams in their various departments and engage in collaborative research across departments. The Director, R & D., Dr. Blessing Okogbue exposed this as a major secret of winning external research grants such as the TETFund National Research Fund (NRF), Nigerian Content Development & Monitoring Board (NCDMB) grant and other international grant awards. These funding bodies look out for applied research and collaborating teams with a mix of senior and early career researchers with good gender balance. This is to encourage mentoring of young academics by the older ones in a team and also, foster multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary research which is strategic in solving current global problems, addressing complex environmental challenges and critical local issues. This is expected to reflect in the upcoming Institution based researchers (IBRs) applications in the Polytechnic to help build healthy track records and good baseline reports for external grant applications for better competitiveness and impacts.

Upcoming events

Symposium

The recent 2024 IBR grantees will be making presentations on their progress reports on the research projects so far and the outcomes. This will be in a symposium planned by the Directorate for Research and Development of the Polytechnic to hold before the end of the year 2024.

R & D Publication

Technical report publication will be rolled out by the Directorate. The R & D Committee has been on their toes to ensure the review process is completed for a good outcome.

Training workshop

Two-day workshop on technical report writing and the use of AI research tools will be held next semester by the Directorate for Research & Devt. (R&D).

Conclusion

The Rector desires to revamp the state of research in the Polytechnic to ensure creativity and innovation and the Directorate for Research & Devt. (R&D) is committed to the actualization of this vision through intentional research coordination in the Polytechnic for both staff and students.