

# **A REPORT ON THE UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT INNOVATION WEEK 2023 HELD ON OCTOBER 23-27, 2023 AT THE CBN CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE**

## **PREAMBLE**

The Office of Research and Development of the University of Port Harcourt in partnership with the African Centre of Excellence in Oilfield Chemical Research, African Centre of Excellence in Public Health and Toxicological Research, Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer Office and Uniport Entrepreneurial Centre, University of Port Harcourt, organized the Maiden Uniport Innovation Week, between October 23 and 27, 2023. The theme of the Innovation week was “Deepening the Foundations of Innovation and Entrepreneurship”, and drew participants locally and internationally.

## **DAY 1 ACTIVITIES**

### **THE OPENING CEREMONY**

To start the long week events, graduate students and members of the university community took a roadshow from Delta Park to Abuja Park at 7:30 AM - 9:00 AM. This move helped announce the Maiden Edition of the University of Port Harcourt Innovation Week. This was immediately followed by the formal Opening Event at the CBN Centre of Excellence. The opening event attracted a great number of personalities including the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Prof Owunari Georgewill Abraham, and all Principal offices, the Secretary General of the Association of African Universities and a former Vice Chancellor, Prof. Oluwole Oyewole, Dr. Segun Aina, OFR, a professional banking leader and entrepreneur, Retired Professor KEO Nkanginimie a renowned professor of paediatrics and child health, Dr. Elangi Botoy of the World Intellectual Property Organisation, Industry Partners, Provost of College of Health Sciences, Deans of Faculties, Heads of Departments, Directors of and Centres, Faculty staff and students, and friends of the University.

To explain the expectations from the Week, the Chairman of the Organizing Committee, Prof Iyeopu Siminialayi, who is also the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Research and Development gave the following address: *“For years our university has celebrated an annual research fair, where we exhibit outstanding research from our faculties. Last year at a workshop held on November 7-11, and themed “Building an Innovation and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for the Sustainable*

*Development of the University of Port Harcourt,” our 9<sup>th</sup> Vice Chancellor, Prof Owunari Georgewill challenged the organizing committee to institute an annual innovation week.*

*What is the difference between a research fair and an innovation week? Research, all research is geared towards discovering new knowledge or recreating existing knowledge. Innovation on the other hand involves the generation of new ideas, which can be new products, processes, upgrades to existing services, or business models. Innovation is the act of creating change, introducing a novelty that adds value to existing products or services. In summary, research that results in the creation of new knowledge, ideas, or technology that solves a problem or adds value to existing products or services is innovation. That is what we are celebrating this week.*

*Why is this important? Innovation is essential for the growth of organizations and societies because it drives profitability, prosperity, development and industrialization. It upsets the status quo and spurs a departure from the traditional approach. Innovation requires a change in mindset, fresh thinking, creativity, and the ability to identify opportunities for change and improvement.*

*Entrepreneurship is the willingness of an individual or group such as our university to take risks to turn great ideas into business opportunities. Entrepreneurs thus add value and creativity to innovation. An example: Dr. Obari Gomba of our Faculty of Humanities just won the prestigious NLNG Prize for Literature for his work, Grit. Congratulations Obari. Our university can add even greater value to this remarkable achievement by producing the play or making it into a movie, that will premier here on our campus and tour Rivers State, Nigeria, and the world. In doing so, we will take a calculated risk that the play or movie may not be well received or poorly patronized. If it succeeds, however, we would have created wealth, the author is rewarded, the Department is rewarded, our university is rewarded, and the Vice Chancellor’s vision of a more prosperous University is realized.*

*Entrepreneurs innovate. They endow resources with a new capacity to create wealth. Innovation is the result of a systematic, purposeful activity, which is planned with high predictability of both the results aimed at and that are likely to be achieved. Is there an academic here who is not involved in this activity that is also called research?*

*What needs to change is that entrepreneurs, sorry academics, will have to learn to practice systematic innovation. We all need to see ourselves as entrepreneurs and research as an enterprise. Successful entrepreneurs do not wait until “the muse kisses them” and gives them a “bright idea,” they go to work and whatever their motivation — whether it is an urge to make money, to become a powerful person, indulge a curiosity, or the desire for fame or to make a contribution — try to create new and different satisfactions, to convert a “material” into a “resource” or to combine existing resources in a new and more productive configuration. This is what we expect from all of us.*

*We have invited to help us in our efforts to become an innovative and entrepreneurial university, the Secretary General of the Association of African Universities and a former Vice Chancellor, Prof Oluwole Oyewole. We also have Dr Segun Aina, OFR, a professional banking leader, internationally rated fintech thought leader, ecosystem builder and futurist. We have our own equivalent of Archbishop Desmond Tutu of ‘truth and reconciliation’ fame, Professor KEO*

*Nkanginimie to educate us on how to achieve a change in mindset to embrace and learn innovation and finally Dr Elangi Botoy of the World Intellectual Property Organisation to tell us about Technology and Innovation Support Centre and other resources. All this is just for Day One.*

*I thank you all for being part of this event today and assure you that we all have a lot to learn in the next 5 days. I pray therefore that your time with us truly is rewarded”.*

Immediately after the chairman's remarks was a resounding welcome address presented by Professor D. S. Ogaji, the Center Leader of ACE-PUTOR. As part of the opening ceremony, Professor Owunari Abraham Georgewill, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Port Harcourt presented an intuitive opening remark, starting with the quote “IF WE EXCEL IN THE SCIENCE AND THE ARTS, THE WORLD WILL RESPECT US”. These words were said to have been spoken by Julius Nyerere at Ghana’s 40<sup>th</sup> Independence anniversary celebration on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1997 and by the world-renowned lawyer and orator Professor Patrick Lumumba in a speech in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, very recently.

He delved into the details of Agenda 2063 which encompasses four fundamental pillars namely, fostering a prosperous Africa grounded in inclusive growth and sustainable development, cultivating a tranquil and secure Africa, nurturing an Africa where development is driven by its people, and fortifying a resolute, united Africa. He pledged his commitment to;

- i. Working with the Innovation Week Committee to raise sizable funds that our researchers will compete for, to fund innovative research, addressing these challenges.
- ii. Promoting a culture of quality research by encouraging our students and faculty to publish in Scopus-indexed journals. As an incentive, we will begin by assigning maximum scores for all Scopus-indexed publications, regardless of the number of authors for promotion assessment purposes.
- iii. Encouraging all PhD students to write for grants and award a prize of N1, 000, 000 (one million Naira) to the best award-winning grant application.

He urged our Graduate School to set up a mechanism for identifying intellectual property in graduate student theses and work with our Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer Office to protect them. He announced the Prize for the most innovative research at this year’s event as ₦300,000 and expressed hope and optimism that from next year, the prize would be raised to a value higher than that of the current year. He finally announced that a staff of our university won the prestigious NLNG Prize for Literature through the exercise of innovative research.

Other details of the Day 1 activities are summarized below.

#### **THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS:**

The keynote address was delivered by Professor Olusola Oyewole, on the topic “Promoting Research Excellence, Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer in African Universities”. Professor Oyewole highlighted Africa's potential, emphasizing its vast population and rich agricultural and mineral resources. He stressed that a nation's true wealth lies not in its natural or human resources but in knowledge. He described knowledge as the ability to do things better and smarter, with the generation and exploitation of knowledge being a predominant factor in creating wealth. The ability to produce, select, adapt, commercialize, and utilize knowledge is critical for sustained growth and improved standards of living. He emphasized that in the 21st century, the most valuable skill one can possess is knowledge, and education represents the best investment, not only for individual success but for the success of the nation as a whole.

Professor Oyewole reiterated that the foundation for innovation is research, defining research as a systematic and organized process of inquiry and investigation aimed at generating new knowledge, discovering facts, and answering questions. He highlighted the crucial role of research in advancing human understanding, problem-solving, driving innovation, technology transfer, and entrepreneurship. Innovation was defined as the process of introducing new or incremental changes to products, processes, or services. Various forms of innovation were identified, including products, processes, business models, social innovation, and technological innovation. Professor Oyewole drew attention to the Global Innovation Index, with Nigeria ranking the lowest, and challenged the audience to transform awards, such as the NLNG award, into innovative enterprises. He discussed innovations emanating from Africa, such as health innovations, agricultural innovations, technological innovations, social innovations, and economic advancements. Professor Oyewole emphasized the need to push research beyond mere publication and promotion and highlighted notable innovations from Nigerian universities, such as Babcock University's Bamboo bicycle and the University of Ibadan's Herbal Antiretroviral drug.

The keynote speaker observed that indigenous knowledge, defined as the wealth of traditional knowledge and practices passed down through generations by indigenous communities, was underscored as a valuable resource. He highlighted several areas of indigenous knowledge innovation, including innovative agricultural practices, renewable energy solutions, climate management strategies, indigenous food preservation techniques, medical discoveries, and water management. He reiterated that the road to innovation involved building an innovation culture, establishing innovation hubs and incubators, commercializing research, engaging in collaborative research projects, fostering interdisciplinary initiatives, organizing innovative competitions and challenges, encouraging networking and mentorship, seeking government support, establishing

global partnerships, promoting open access to knowledge, engaging with the community, monitoring and evaluating progress, ensuring sustainable innovation, and incorporating entrepreneurship education. To promote research excellence in African universities, Professor Oyewole proposed strategies that included investing in research infrastructure, faculty development, research funding, collaborations, and publication and dissemination.

The concept of entrepreneurial education was presented, focusing on developing knowledge, skills, mindset change, and competencies. Emphasizing that promoting entrepreneurship in Africa requires offering entrepreneurship courses and programs, establishing business incubators and accelerators, organizing entrepreneurial competitions, providing faculty and staff training, ensuring access to funding, and establishing technology transfer offices (TTOs) where specialized departments within research institutions, play a pivotal role in transferring research and intellectual property into the commercial sector. He outlined some key functions of the TTOs including intellectual property management, commercialization, licensing agreements, start-up support, and funding and grants.

#### **INVITED LECTURE 1:**

An invited lecture on the topic “Building a Sustainable Future for Tertiary Institutions through Innovation and Entrepreneurship” was delivered by Dr. Segun Aina, OFR, a professional banking leader, entrepreneur, and Chairman of Opolo Global Innovation Limited. Dr. Segun initiated his lecture by stressing the importance of garnering stakeholder support to transform the current entrepreneurial landscape. He lauded the University of Port Harcourt for its commitment to fostering entrepreneurship, underlining the symbiotic relationship between innovation and entrepreneurship. In his view, innovation denotes the application of novel or significantly improved solutions aimed at better meeting the needs of humanity. On the other hand, he defined entrepreneurship as the process of identifying, assessing, and executing business opportunities and pointed out that under favourable conditions, both innovation and entrepreneurship play pivotal roles in realizing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including job creation, enhanced productivity, economic growth, socio-economic transformation, poverty alleviation, and industrialization.

Dr. Segun emphasized the urgent necessity of generating economic prosperity via scholarly inquiry and advocated for vigorous collaboration between educational establishments and the business sector as such partnership has the potential to expedite the conversion of research findings into innovative solutions, commercialized products, and entrepreneurial ventures. By drawing comparisons with renowned institutions like Harvard, known for its substantial research funding, he underscored the

fact that faculty members in such establishments continue to prioritize the provision of education to students, despite their affluent status. He advocated for a paradigm shift within universities, urging a move from the traditional roles focused on teaching and learning to a more progressive function that prioritizes innovation and enterprise. He proposed considering public universities as business entities, adopting a "research-preneur" mindset, re-imagining collaborations with industries, and revisiting grants and investment models.

## **ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION**

After the initial two lectures, a panel discussion was conducted that was moderated by Professor Vincent Idemyor. The panel consisted of the speakers, Prof Oyewole and Dr Aina and Professors Nath Abraham and Mathew Wegwu. The goal was to deepen the discussion and enable greater understanding, especially by offering an opportunity for the audience to ask questions.

## **INVITED LECTURE 2:**

A second invited lecture was delivered by the esteemed retired Professor KEO Nkanginieme of Pediatrics and Child Health, on the topic "Thinking, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship as Catalysts for Learning Objectives-driven Productivity and Community-oriented Education". During his presentation, Professor Nkanginieme provided a comprehensive historical overview of his involvement in transforming the University of Port-Harcourt into an institution renowned for its innovation and entrepreneurial spirit. He eloquently articulated his objectives and reasoning behind this lecture to the audience, with the main objectives being to;

- i. Inspire and motivate individuals to recognize, comprehend, develop, and utilize their thinking, innovation, and entrepreneurship capabilities, to draw attention to prevalent challenges related to learning, character, and ethics within the university community;
- ii. Prompt a critical examination of the learning objectives of the general studies course;
- iii. Facilitate the acquisition of value-creation skills that foster community-oriented productivity and development.

Prof. Nkanginieme proceeded to expound upon the seven stages of cognition, namely knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and creativity. Additionally, the lecturer delineated the three domains of learning, which encompass the affective, cognitive, and motor spheres. Prof. Nkanginieme deliberated upon the methodologies for assessing character and put forward the hypothesis that character assessment can be accomplished by integrating the ethical

principles of virtuous living elucidated along the Nolan principles which involve the process of assigning scores to the quantifiable elements.

### **INVITED LECTURE 3:**

The third invited lecture was handled by Dr. Elangi Botoy Ituku of the World Intellectual Property Organisation, Geneva, on the topic “Technology Information for the Progression of Innovation and Socio-Economic Development”. Dr. Elangi presented an exceptional discourse on the utilization of Technology Information for the progression of Innovation and Socio-economic development. During his introductory declaration, he disclosed the existence of numerous technologies stored in databases that are readily available for use. Consequently, there is no necessity to invest time, effort, and resources in the laboratory to generate what is already in existence. He encouraged that the University community should acquire access to these technologies, replicate them, introduce innovation, and thereby foster job creation. He gave links to access the databases for use.

### **PRESENTATION BY SHALINA HEALTHCARE LIMITED**

Mr. Folorunso Alaran of Shalina Healthcare Limited delivered a discourse on their pharmaceutical advancements within the Nigerian pharmaceutical sector. Emphasis was placed upon the vast potential of the pharmaceutical industry in Nigeria, driven by the considerable population size. Attention was drawn to the company's objectives of positively impacting the lives of one billion Nigerians through its diverse range of product offerings. Additionally, an enumeration of the various forms of innovation, strategies, and cultural aspects prevalent within the pharmaceutical industry was expounded upon.

## **DAY 2 ACTIVITIES**

Day 2 activities commenced at 9:00 AM with a detailed recap of the previous day's activities. This session was anchored by Dr. Chinagorom Ibeachu, a member of Team Rapporteur. This was followed by official welcoming of the Vice-Chancellor, Principal Officers, invited guests, members of staff, students and all attendees. Other protocols were rightly observed.

### **KEYNOTE LECTURE**

A keynote lecture titled “Repositioning Post Graduate Researches for Innovation” was presented by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, Professor Kinikanwo Azunda Anele. Prof. Anele

commenced by positing that no society grows bigger without research. He advocated that government should spare time and resources to encourage researchers. He sadly observed that some graduate students do not fully understand the value of research nor do they understand researches that should positively impact the country and society. He further highlighted the roles of universities as critical agents of social transformation and change, where these roles are actualized through research, teaching, enterprise, and community development initiatives.

Furthermore, Prof. Anele acknowledged that supervisors, though faced with challenges, occupy a central position in the supervision of postgraduate research, and in the pursuit of academic excellence. He defined innovation as the process of bringing new ideas, methods, products, service or solution that have positive impact and value.

He noted that it has been reported that universities contributed 74% of the ground breaking invention in the world but Nigeria has remained where she is today because researchers have not been given a pride of place. He acknowledged that postgraduate students have produced and are continuously producing commercializable and patentable products. Regrettably, a good number of such research results are yet to be recognized and embraced by successive governments. He looked at ways to reposition postgraduate researchers for impactful innovation which includes but not limited to;

- ❖ Identifying opportunity for innovation;
- ❖ Generation of ideas that can capture the identified opportunities;
- ❖ Evaluation and selection of the ideas.

He concluded by stating that until postgraduate researchers are deliberately repositioned to play their novel and important role, society will hardly experience the innovations capable of enabling us to move forward. Prof. Anele recommended that the Directorate for Intellectual Property and Technological Transfer should be strengthened to track all commercializable and patentable outputs from postgraduate researchers.

## **INVITED LECTURE 1:**

An invited lecture on the topic “Making Impossibility Possible” was delivered by Professor Peter James Kpolovie. He commenced the presentation by challenging all attendees to be different in research endeavours as no person innovates by doing things the same way others do, positing that everyone needs to breakout of the status quo in order to invent and innovate. He defined researchers as those who make “impossibility possible”. He stated that research makes impossibility possible and solves unsolvable problems through what he termed as IDCI an acronym for



## INVENTION = DISCOVERY = CREATION = INNOVATION

He believes that a person is said to have done research only when he/she empirically makes an IDC, without which no research has been executed. He emphasized that the international market determines the worth of an invention in terms of how much people gladly pay for invention. He then urged everyone to become a prolific inventor.

### DISCUSSION PANEL

There was discussion on what can be done to improve research and innovation in the University of Port Harcourt. It was rightly observed that lot of inventions are done but they need to be commercialized. It was agreed that we must develop the concept of working together in order to promote go research, innovation and commercialization.

### INVITED LECTURE 2:

A second invited lecture was delivered by Engr. Dr. K. B. Chukwuogo, the Managing Director of Boskel Nigeria Limited, on the topic “University-Industry Partnership for Improved Prosperity of Higher Education Institution and Society”. He started by emphasizing the importance of innovation and entrepreneurial activities in the development of countries, and as such society should explore ways to deepen the activities that are innovative and entrepreneurial. He highlighted some common challenges faced by innovators and entrepreneurs and include Lack of finance, poor state of infrastructure, corruption, Poor educational facilities, poor quality of our judicial systems, etc. He stated that purposeful and widespread collaboration between industry and academia is one of the methods that can deepen innovation and entrepreneurial activities. He identified three main stakeholders in any effective Industry- Academia collaboration. These include **the industry group- the academia group - the government group**. He considered that such collaboration could be executed in Basic Research and Development, Internship and Industrial Training, etc. He observed that as beneficial as such collaboration may be to an economy, there are some challenges which may deter its utilization of this powerful tool. Such challenges as listed by him include;

- Ownership outcomes
- Cultural differences between the academia and industry
- Lack of enabling policies
- Poor funding of institution
- Accountability of funds deployed etc

However, he proffered some solutions to the challenges which include; Adequate funding, Development and enforcement of clear policies, Creation of dedicated group to drive collaborations,

and was optimistic that such will lead to Improvement of facilities, Capital generation, Knowledge transfer, Improvement of curricular for students, High quality internships, improved employment and sabbatical, etc. He concluded by stating that enormous potentials of Industry-Academia collaboration have not been tapped in Nigeria, that while the challenges that face such collaborations in our society are clear and heavy, efforts should be made by the various governing boards of the institution to create some solution that will permit perceptible growth. He suggested that the university should organise an industry fare to enable industries understand what is available in the universities which makes it easy for collaboration.

## **FACULTY PRESENTATIONS**

The Provost of College of Health Sciences, Prof. Angela Frank-Briggs, presented the faculty innovations on behalf of all faculties in the College of Health Sciences. The Dean of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Science, Professor J.S Aprioku presented the faculty innovations. The Director of the School of Public Health, Professor Best Ordinioha, made a presentation on behalf of the School of Public Health.

## **DAY 3 ACTIVITIES**

Day 3 activities commenced at 9:00 AM with a detailed recap of the previous day's activities. This session was anchored by Dr. Chioma George-Anokwuru, a member of Team Rapporteur. This was followed by official welcoming of the Vice-Chancellor, Principal Officers, invited guests, members of staff, students and all attendees. Other protocols were rightly observed.

## **KEYNOTE LECTURE**

A keynote lecture titled “Research Culture and Open Science” was presented by Prof. Beatrice Olutoyin Opeolu, Director, BEE Solutions and Consultancy Services, South Africa and SETAC World Council Vice President. Prof. Opeolu commenced explaining the concept of 'Research Culture' as referring to an environment that fosters research activities, encompassing the attitudes, practices, and values prevalent within a community or system. She emphasized the significance of a positive research culture in driving innovation and she provided insights into key attributes that contribute to a healthy research culture. The attributes include;

- i. **Transparency:** Prof. Opeolu highlighted the importance of openness and collaboration as integral components of a transparent research culture.

- ii. ***Ethical Practices:*** She stressed the significance of adhering to established ethical guidelines and principles in conducting research.
- iii. ***Supporting Environment:*** She emphasized the need to provide individuals with access to necessary facilities, thereby facilitating their research endeavors.
- iv. ***Mentoring and Training:*** Prof. Opeolu emphasized the role of mentorship and continuous learning in nurturing a thriving research culture.
- v. ***Recognition and Reward:*** She posited that acknowledging and rewarding contributions can significantly foster a culture of research.
- vi. ***Diversity and Inclusion:*** Creating an environment that embraces diversity and inclusivity is crucial for a robust research culture.

Prof. Opeolu introduced the concept of Open Science as a movement aimed at encouraging collaboration, promoting transparency, and ensuring open access to data for all stakeholders. She outlined the fundamental principles and practices associated with Open Science, which include:

- Open Access Publications
- Open Data
- Open Methodologies/Protocols
- Open Peer Review
- Citizen Science
- Open Education Resources
- Collaborative Platforms
- Research Crowdsourcing
- Innovative Publishing Models
- Open Source Software

She emphasized that the relationship between Research Culture and Open Science lies in the values of transparency, integrity, and disciplinary rigor that they both uphold.

Prof. Opeolu outlined the roles of universities, staff and students **in** fostering innovation and entrepreneurship. She noted that while policy structures are in place, the challenge often lies in the effective implementation of the policies.

## **INVITED LECTURE 1:**

An invited lecture on the topic “Creativity, and Innovation in Nigeria: Emerging Developments, Prospects, and Challenges” was delivered by Mr. Michael O. Akpan, the Director of Regulatory and Compliance, Copyright Commission, Abuja. Mr. Akpan discussed the pivotal role of copyright in Nigeria's creative economy and highlighted the statutory provisions of copyright, challenges in

protection and enforcement, emerging trends, and the imperative for improved utilization of the copyright system in the creative sector. He observed that in some surveyed countries, creative industries have emerged as essential tools for sustainable development globally, contributing between 4% and 6.5% to GDP.

Mr. Akpan noted that Nigeria's creative sector primarily encompasses entertainment and arts, including publishing, music, movies, fashion, and crafts. Furthermore, that Nigeria, often referred to as the heartbeat of Africa, possesses a thriving creative industry, where its music and movies have gained immense popularity worldwide. He noted the place of Copyright and the Creative Economy, emphasizing that Copyright and other intellectual property rights (IPRs) play a crucial role in transforming creative activity into profitable and socially beneficial industries. He observed however that, creators often face challenges in recognizing and understanding their IP rights. As a way of enlightenment, he referred to the Copyright Act of 2022 which is the fundamental legal instrument for copyright in Nigeria, mentioning that the Copyright Act covers various aspects, including protection of different categories of works, rights of authors in the digital environment, online enforcement procedures, anti-piracy measures, and institutional arrangements for regulation and enforcement. Specifically, the Copyright Act of 2022 encompasses a comprehensive range of provisions aimed at safeguarding various categories of creative works. These categories encompass literary, musical, artistic, sound recordings, audio-visual works, and broadcasts, along with protections for performers' rights and expressions of folklore. Moreover, the law extends rights to authors within the digital domain, including the right to make works available for user access through streaming services.

### **INVITED DISCUSSION WITH TotalEnergies**

An invited discussion on Industry-Academia Collaboration was honoured by Mr. Obi Imemba, the Executive Director of Total Energies E & P, Nigeria. Mr. Imemba discussed on the topic “Innovations and its Strategic Axis at TotalEnergies”. He appreciated the longstanding collaboration between TotalEnergies and the University of Port Harcourt, spanning 19 years, and dedicated to training high-caliber graduates for the energy sector. He observed that as Energy is reinventing itself, so are we. He mentioned TotalEnergies’ purpose which include to supply more affordable, more available and cleaner energy to as many people as possible.

Mr. Imemba defined Innovation as being synonymous with disruption, and is within the capacity of every individual. Thus, any effort to augment value in a given context qualifies as innovation. He charged that it is imperative to foster a conscious and proactive mindset towards innovation, ensuring it is intentional, systematic, and a continuous endeavour. He mentioned that TotalEnergies adheres to

five core values, with innovation standing as a prominent pillar. He mentioned that the company is transitioning from Total to Energies, epitomizing this evolution through the development of novel energy products, encompassing gas, hydro, wind, and other avenues. This evolution mirrors the transformation underway within the energy sector itself. To remain pertinent, a dynamic and innovative mindset is indispensable.

The Executive Director of Total Energies Nigeria, pointed out that Digital technology assumes a pivotal role in TotalEnergies' innovation endeavours. Hence, implementing energy-efficient measures and deploying motion sensors represent pivotal steps towards energy conservation. Additionally, digitalization is instrumental in curtailing Greenhouse Gas emissions. As an aspiration, the noted that by the end of the current year, TotalEnergies aspires to achieve a significant milestone - becoming the first company in Africa to attain zero routine flaring in Nigeria, a testament to its commitment to sustainable and responsible energy practices.

## **DISCUSSION PANEL**

There was a round table discussion session chaired by Prof. Julie Osuji.

## **FACULTY PRESENTATIONS**

The Dean of the Faculty of Science, Prof. C. N. Ehirim, presented the Faculty of Science innovations. on behalf of all faculties in the College of Health Sciences. On behalf of the Faculty of Agriculture, the Associate Dean, Dr. Zelda Anne Omasanuwa, presented the faculty innovations. On behalf of the Faculty of Computing, the Dean Professor Laeticia Nneka Onyejegbu, presented the faculty innovations. Prof. Ossia Victor, on behalf of the Dean of the faculty of Engineering, presented the Faculty of Engineering innovations. Dr. Omokheyke Omorotionmwan presented Innovations from the Centre for Marine Pollution Monitoring & Seafood Safety (CEMPOS).

## **DAY 4 ACTIVITIES**

Day 4 activities commenced at 9:00 AM with a detailed recap of the previous day's activities. This session was anchored by Dr. Moses Asak, a member of Team Rapporteur. This was followed by official welcoming of the Vice-Chancellor, Principal Officers, invited guests, members of staff, students and all attendees. Other protocols were rightly observed.

## **KEYNOTE LECTURE 1**

A keynote lecture titled “Innovations and Inventions: Making the Difference in Academia” was presented by the The Honourable Commissioner of Education, Rivers State, Prof. Prince Mmom. It was an exciting moment commencing very engaging activities in Social Sciences, Management Sciences, Law and the Creatives. Prof. Mmom applauded the Management of the University of Port Harcourt for organizing the Innovation Week, stating that the University is setting the pace for others to follow especially with the recent award of an Innovation Hub by Tetfund to the University. He began his lecture by citing and discussing some quotes from notable individuals such as Albert Einstein and Micheal Porter, positing that most innovations involve doing the things we do every day a little bit better rather than creating something completely new and different, and that innovation- which is doing new things, is different from creativity- which involves thinking up new things. He emphasized that innovation is the central issue in a nation’s economic prosperity.

While discussing the pivotal role of a University to innovative research, he cited the quote of Jean Piaget, *“The goal of education is not to increase the amount of knowledge but to create the possibilities for a child to invent and discover, to create men who are capable of doing new things.”*

Prof. Mmom remarked that the University of Port Harcourt stands as a testament of decades of academic development and innovation, and that the University prides itself as an entrepreneurial university. He mentioned that across the institution’s academic landscape, innovation has taken on a unique dimension, encompassing the spirit of resourcefulness in the face of adversity, and devising creative solutions amid scarce resources with the unwavering commitment to improving lives. He further stated that the journey so far, is a tribute to the universities and scholars who have transformed limitations into opportunities, and who, against all odds, have emerged as beacons of hope, and progress for the nation. Prof. Mmom reiterated the importance of the Triple-Helix Model of innovation which involves the academia identifying and working with sources of opportunities within the industry and community to foster economic and social development.

Prof. Mmom defined Social Innovation as a new law, organization or procedure that changes the ways in which people relate to themselves or each other, either individually or collectively. He referred to it as the process of developing and implementing new, effective solutions to solve social and environmental issues. He further stated that such solutions should meet current social needs better than it has been done before. In the quest to drive further understanding, Prof. Mmom listed four ways to get started with social innovation, namely, getting to know everyone involved, building strong partnership, re-evaluating how to measure success, and enabling a culture of innovation which should be enforced not just at the leadership levels but from bottom-up. He considered that social

innovation improves community development through partnership and alliances, promotes social and environmental responsibility in community by balancing the current need for resources and the needs of future generations by following the sustainable development goals, and finally brings about greater value to public services by catering more effectively and holistically to the needs of the population.

Prof. Mmom acknowledged that the University of Port Harcourt is part of the institutions in the global south faced with a lot of challenges and barriers, but he confidently said we can raise up to the challenge if innovative culture is promoted among the faculties, students and administrators to champion innovation by providing the necessary support systems, incentives, such as personal development programs, performance-based compensations, success stories publications, establishment of mentorship networks and opportunities for collaboration.

In his concluding remarks, Prof. Mmom, stated that our actions today will define the future and that the University of Port Harcourt is well-positioned to address pressing regional issues because it has the manpower and commitment to do so. He challenged all to embrace innovation, champion invention and carry forward the legacy of excellence that defines universities in the global south. He ends his presentation by stating that our research efforts in the university would be vanity if they do not lead to innovations and inventions that would bring development to our society, thereby making a difference.

## **KEYNOTE LECTURE 2:**

A second keynote lecture was presented by a Literary Historian, Prof. Mngumber Vicky Sylvester of the University of Abuja. The presentation entitled “Creative Motivation and Exchanges for Strategies in Education” had focus on innovative strategies used in education. Prof. Sylvester started her presentation by stating that in today’s fast-changing world, education faces challenges which the traditional teaching methods fall short in addressing, particularly in preparing students for innovation. She further observed that the use of technology alone is also not sufficient especially for disinterested students. She described creative motivation as a force, which with certain experiences, galvanizes the individual creative related actions to do, learn or accomplish something new. In education, she stated that creative motivation encompasses the factors that inspire students and educators to think creatively and develop innovative solutions to problems.

Prof. Sylvester shared some innovative strategies used in education;

- i. Project-base learning that cultivates creativity, critical thinking and collaboration in solving real-world problems,
- ii. Flipped classroom shifts learning from lecture to interactive activities and discussions that promote self directed learning and collaboration.
- iii. Gamification which enhances student engagement and motivation, thus fostering active participation and interaction in class.
- iv. Personalized learning involving tailored instruction to individual student's need and interest.
- v. Experimental learning involving hands-on experiences and practical applications of knowledge.

To effectively implement creative motivation in education to drive innovative strategies, Prof. Sylvester suggested the need for;

- i. Training and professional development of educators
- ii. Revising the Curriculum to align with innovative strategies and emphasize real-world applications
- iii. Leveraging technology in creating innovative learning experience.
- iv. Assessment redesign to align with creative motivation and innovative strategies.
- v. Industry and community engagement and collaboration.

## **INVITED LECTURE 1:**

An invited lecture on the topic “Innovation and entrepreneurship in a creative economy: a strategic road map for an African Renaissance” was delivered by Dr. Sam Dede. It was an eye-opening and passionate session. Dr. Sam Dede started by enumerating the statistics of the revenue generated by the creative economy in cinema, Nollywood, telecoms and information services, music industry and textile and fashion in Nigeria. He observed unfortunately that statistics of the revenue generated are not captured by the country's budget, because the revenue were not generated on the shores of the country. Citing the examples of the musical artists, such as Wizkid and Burnaboy, Dr. Dede mentioned that their songs have billions of streams on the foreign streaming platform, *Spotify* and are paid \$3,300 per 1 million streams resulting in billions of dollars which are not brought back to Nigeria because their management companies are based abroad. Similar trends were observed in the global fashion industry, where the industry is valued at \$1.7 trillion dollars, yet Africa contributes only 1% to the global creative goods export. He further observed that the Nigerian fashion industry spends about \$1.5 billion dollars on fashion accessories imported from countries like China and do



not export anything except customized fashion accessories made from those imported goods. These losses, he said are the result of the fact that we are not deliberate and intentional with what we want to achieve with the creative industry.

Citing the United Nations conference on trade and development of creative economic report, Dr. Dede posited that the creative economy has the ability to create and circulate intellectual capital, generate income, jobs and export earnings while promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development in Nigeria. He was optimistic that this can be possible through a strategic road map, involving the stakeholder being deliberate and intentional, rejigging our school curriculum to reflect and emphasize the creative sector and African consciousness, downplaying theory and starting the students on the path of creativity, innovation and enterprise, establishing more comprehensive and vocational schools to learn skills and crafts needed for creativity, the need for Teachers Training Colleges to be reinstated to train teachers. He mentioned that a Nigerian-made movie “The black book” is the current No.1 movie on Netflix, and opined that the creative economics can reverse Africa’s fortunes and people to a continent of proud Afrocentric, economically and politically liberated minds.

## **ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION**

There was a round table discussion with Dr. Dede and Prof. Sylvester, the session was chaired the the 7<sup>th</sup> VC of University of Port Harcourt, Prof. Joseph Ajienka.

## **INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP**

A team of personnel from the Central Bank of Nigeria, Port Harcourt Branch, led by Mr. Collins Onosa, made a 10-minute presentation on the **Central Bank of Nigeria regulatory sandbox framework and the eNaira innovation**. Mr. Onosa mentioned that the regulatory sandbox will enable firms to test innovative financial products, services and business models in a controlled environment with regulatory oversight. He listed the various ways the university management, staff and students can benefit from the innovative platforms developed by the CBN. One of such innovative platforms is the Digital Currency Platform, the eNaira. Mr. Collins observed that Nigeria is the first in Africa and third in the world to have a digital platform for the country’s currency. He enumerated some benefits of the platform, which include; high currency management, reduced insecurity issues accrued from moving large sums of money from one part of the country to another, and block chain technology. He further intimated the attendees that the platform will also leverage on diaspora remittance. Fielding questions from the audience, Mr. Collins shared the two ways in which

one can open the eNaira account, either through the eNaira App from Google play store or by dialing the code \*997#. He also mentioned that if anyone experiences fraud from their accounts in any commercial banks, they should not hesitate to contact the customer information unit in CBN via the website, [www.cpd.gov.ng](http://www.cpd.gov.ng) , who will handle the issue and protect the interest of the customer and client.

## **INVITED LECTURE 2:**

A second invited lecture was delivered by Prof. Gabriel Ogbonna of the Faculty of Management Sciences on the topic " Transforming and Empowering Academics into Successful Entrepreneurs: Enough of Theory ". Prof. Ogbonna started his presentation by pointing out that globally, academics are known as the best brains, scientists, excellent researchers and teachers who have track records of inventions. He observed however that from a recently conducted survey, most research are done with outdated topics from the internet and library publications, and many of the articles and publications used are not even relevant to the world's needs. He observed sadly that too much time and financial resources are wasted on unproductive research activities and the condition of some academics after retirement is a source of great concern.

Prof. Ogbonna proposed that if our Research and Entrepreneurship are 50% productive, we will retire very comfortable and the university will not only be financially buoyant but will have enough funds to operate and may even be lending to other organizations. While quoting Peter Drucker, he stated that successful entrepreneurs see what others do not see and if you can see “what is not yet seen” by others, then you will be a successful entrepreneur. He reiterated that there is need to tailor research to the needs and wants of customers and that there is an urgent need to declare state of emergency in research effort because the output of research does not address the need of the people. He emphasized that there is need for a paradigm shift in research, where Research should focus on filling confirmed gap in knowledge from the starving and suffering Public.

To transform academics into successful entrepreneurs, he posited that one should ask himself/herself some fundamental questions, like What type of business can I start? What Knowledge, Skills, experience and core competence do I have? Do I have the initial capital required or a source of raising such capital to enable me start the business? Do I know the source of supply at fairly reduced price, either of the finished goods for trading or raw materials if it is manufacturing business so that I will not price my business out of the market? Do I know the potential customers who may be buying from me on a regularly basis? Which location will best suit the business and guarantee reasonable

customers' patronage and profit? and What need and want am I going to satisfy on a continuing basis, or "creative destruction" am I going to embark upon? He advised that one should know his or her game, and what he or she is naturally passionate about. Stating that passion is the sure foundation, master key and anchor for business success.

In his conclusion, he recommended that researchers can start now to save from available income, no matter how small and make investment that will create wealth and give them the passive income and not active income. He advised to start small and DREAM BIG in order to become a successful entrepreneur.

## **FACULTY PRESENTATIONS**

The faculty presentations commenced with a very beautiful performance by the Faculty of Humanities. The performance showcased a collaborative effort of the Faculty with significant contributions from all departments. The theme was 'Repositioning waste for documentation of the *Iria* festival'. The audience was thrilled by the spoken words, captivating dance steps, sonorous voices and beautiful costumes and props. The performance showcased the various perspectives and elements of the intriguing, topical and culturally relevant *Iria* Festival in the Niger Delta region. Other presentations were from Faculties of Education, Social Science, Management Science, Communication and Media Studies, and Law.

## **DAY 5 ACTIVITIES**

The University of Port Harcourt's 2023 Annual Innovation Week culminated in a remarkable closing ceremony. The closing activities commenced at 9:00 AM with a detailed recap of the previous day's activities. This session was anchored by Dr. Blessing Odogwu, a member of Team Rapporteur. This was followed by official welcoming of the Vice-Chancellor, Principal Officers, invited guests, members of staff, students and all attendees. Other protocols were rightly observed.

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Owunari Georgewill Abraham, in his remarks expressed his satisfaction with the week's success, stating that it had exceeded expectations. He highlighted a significant development in the form of a potential partnership with TETFUND to establish an innovation hub, stating that the University of Port Harcourt is among the six universities earmarked for this initiative. He thanked the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Development, Prof. Iyeopu Siminialayi, and

the entire University of Port Harcourt Innovation Committee, for excellent delivery of the Maiden Edition of University of Port Harcourt Innovation Week. He appreciated all invited guests, staff and students of the University, as well as all participants, acknowledging that Innovation is vital for economic advancement and societal benefit.

### **KEYNOTE LECTURE 1**

A keynote lecture titled “Collaborative Ecosystem: The Role of Innovation Hub” was presented by Ms. Lucy Johnson Ekpenyong, a dedicated Private Sector Development Specialist and the Akwa Ibom State Manager, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN). Ms. Ekpenyong delivered an insightful lecture on the pivotal role of an innovation hub and considered it as a dynamic space that fosters creativity, collaborative interdisciplinary cooperation, and the development of innovative ideas. Emphasizing that these hubs serve as vibrant ecosystems where students, faculty, experts, and investors converge to create ground-breaking solutions. She further emphasized the importance of mentorship, particularly highlighting the crucial role of faculty members.

According to Ms. Ekpenyong an Innovation Hub is a dynamic, collaborative space that nurtures creativity, interdisciplinary cooperation, and the development of innovative ideas and projects. It acts as a fusion of creativity, knowledge, mentorship, and resources, working harmoniously to drive innovation forward. She established that the Hub is not only a hotbed for innovation but also a springboard for entrepreneurship. It lays the foundation for entrepreneurial thinking through a collaborative environment that cultivates innovation at its core, and where students learn to see challenges as potential business ventures and gain real-world experience in entrepreneurship, and faculty members act as mentors, advisors, and catalysts for cross-disciplinary interactions. She emphasized the place of Expert Engagement, Investor Involvement, External Partnerships in the Innovation Hub ecosystem, observing that the collaborative culture within the Innovation Hub extends its reach beyond the university's borders, positively impacting industries, communities, and the world at large. She called on Stakeholders including Academic Lecturers, University Management, State Government Representatives, Non-Academic Staff, and Students, to actively participate and support the collaborative ecosystem of the Innovation Hub as embracing collaboration is an invitation to shape the future of innovation and leave a lasting legacy for generations to come.

## **INAUGURATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT ENTREPRENEURIAL AND INNOVATION CLUB**

The University of Port Harcourt Entrepreneurial and Innovation Club was inaugurated to facilitate students' entry into the world of entrepreneurship. The Vice Chancellor in his charge to the student inductees emphasized that the club demands focus, dedication, and a sense of responsibility to generate ideas in the incubation phase, clarifying that it is not a social club.

### **KEYNOTE LECTURE 2**

A second Keynote lecture was delivered by the 7<sup>th</sup> Vice- Chancellor of the University of Port Harcourt and Chair Occupant of Emmanuel Egbogah Chair of Petroleum Engineering, Prof. Joseph A. Ajienka on "The Making of an Entrepreneurial University". Prof. Ajienka's lecture focused on the transformation of universities into entrepreneurial entities in the new age of knowledge, and particularly explored the global shift towards sustainable development, emergence of the knowledge economy, and the impact of the 4th Industrial Revolution.

**The New Age of Knowledge:** Prof. Ajienka emphasized the significance of the New Age of Knowledge, characterized by connection, cooperation, collaboration, and community. He highlighted the importance of partnerships and the Triple Helix Plus+ Development Model in shaping the post-pandemic future of work.

**The Triple Helix Global Social Innovation Model:** The lecture discussed the innovative relationship between government, university, and industry, which has led to the establishment of international associations, networks, and knowledge assets. This model has given rise to entrepreneurial universities, science/technology parks, business incubators/start-up schools, and knowledge and technology transfer offices.

**Rise of Industry Schools and Micro-Credits:** Prof. Ajienka introduced a pedagogical model based on the Triple Helix, emphasizing the integration of practical industry expertise with academic instruction. He highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary research collaborations in addressing societal challenges and driving regional and national development.

**Entrepreneurial University:** The lecture defined an entrepreneurial university as a research-intensive institution committed to creativity, innovation, commercialization, and entrepreneurship for sustainable development. It emphasized the role of faculty engagement in entrepreneurial activities and the establishment of structures, policies, and programs to support this mission.

**Creativity and Innovation:** The lecture underscored the importance of turning research into action and highlighted the transformative power of innovation. It emphasized the need for entrepreneurial

education to facilitate the transition from research outcomes to new products and services that generate wealth and growth opportunities.

Prof. Ajienka identified areas of challenges such as bureaucracy, policy fluctuations, and funding constraints that universities may face in their transformation into entrepreneurial entities. He urged universities to leverage their intellectual capital, establish strategic research architectures, and foster interdisciplinary collaborations to overcome these obstacles.

### **INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR 2023 AWARD**

The long-awaited moment to announce the Innovator of the year was welcomed with so much excitement and anxiety as every faculty considered it deserved to win the prize. The 2023 Innovation Assessment Committee Chairman, Prof. Chinyere Pedro-Egbe, on behalf of the Committee, presented the committee report to the Vice-Chancellor. The second runner up comprised of the innovators Fawehinmi HB, Okoh PD, Oparaocha CA, Oghenemavwe LE, David LK, Ebieto C, Amadi M, Nwofor PN with innovation entitled “Design and Fabrication of AMRG Chair and Mega-size Calipers for Anthropometric Evaluations”. The first runner up comprised of the innovators Chinwuba Victor Ossia and Akuro Big-Alabo, with innovation entitled “Development and Characterization of Green Automotive Brakepads from Waste Shells of Giant African Snail (*Achatina achatina* L.)”. The winner of the INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD was Prof. Sotonye Fyनेface-Ogan, with innovation entitled “Epidural Space Localization: A Novel Slingshot Approach”.

Best Stage Presentation Awards went to the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities.

### **CLOSING FORMALITIES**

Following the presentation of awards, the 2023 Innovation Week was brought to a grand close with closing remarks by the Chairman of Innovation week, Prof Iyeopu Siminialayi. The University and National anthems were taken and post activity involving the unveiling of University Entrepreneurial and Innovation Club Signet By the representation of SMEDAN Director General, Ms. Lucy Johnson Ekpenyong, took place at the University of Port Harcourt Entrepreneurial Centre.

### **APPRECIATIONS**

The University of Port Harcourt Innovation Committee is thankful to the Vice-Chancellor and University Management Team for the full support, commitment and dedication expressed throughout

the preparation and execution phases of the 2023 Innovation Week. We are also thankful to the World Bank Centre leaders for the financial and all-round supports.

We express our deep appreciation to the Committee of Provost and Deans for being fully involved, and offering us so much assistance through the faculty representatives. We appreciate the graduate students who saw the need to be fully involved in the 5-day events. We also appreciate the undergraduate students who spared many hours of their academic activity moments to benefit from the depth of the lectures and engagements at the events.

We are very thankful to the Keynote Speakers, Guest Lecturers, Industry Partners, Panel Discussants, and other stakeholders, who through their involvements and participations in the Innovation Week activities made the event a huge success.

We do not fail to acknowledge the OLMPMPIA who quietly entered the Venue of Activities and interacted young student innovators and through which the best student innovators were identified and sponsored to represent the University of Port Harcourt in Kenya.

For all unnamed persons who contributed to the success of the programme and the full realization of our dream for an excellent Maiden Innovation week, we express our most sincere gratitude and appreciation.

With a deep sense of reverence, we acknowledge the help of the Almighty God and we give Him all glory.

#### **INNOVATION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Prof. Iyeopu M. Siminialayi	Chairman
Prof. Gregory O. Avwiri	Member
Prof. Chioma Blaise-Chikere	Member
Prof. Kingsley C. PatrickIwuanyanwu	Member
Mr. Uduma Ikpa	Member
Prof. Mary P. Iwundu	Member/Secretary