



FUTA NEWS

Funding Research is the function of all- Ogunruku

A call has been made to governments, the organized private sector and public spirited individuals and philanthropists to see research funding as a key contribution to the country's technological and economic development. .

Mr. Ayorinde Ogunruku, a Director in the office of the Vice-Chancellor, the Federal University of Technology, Akure and immediate past Registrar, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife made this call while delivering a lecture organized by the University's Centre for Research and Development (CERAD). The Lecture titled "Funding Research in Nigeria: Past, Present and Future" x-rayed the concept of research funding, challenges and ways to make it contribute more meaningfully to the country's needs. Mr. Ogunruku said unless there is a new level of synergy between government, industry and Universities and other research institutions, research and development will remain at its lowest ebb in Nigeria. Making a global comparison, Ogunruku said "In the most advanced economies of the world, industries and others in the organized private sector fund research in the Universities. They take their concerns to Universities and Universities in turn proffer solutions through the outcome of their research. Where this is done, win-win situation is created in which the University as an institution benefits, the individual researcher and the company that sponsors the research also benefit".

Lamenting inadequate funding of research by successful Nigerian governments, he urged universities and research organizations to engage other sources if they will remain relevant and competitive. He also called on government to provide enabling environment through legislative and capacity enablement that will commit universities and allied institutions to research which is critical to national development. Speaking on challenges to attracting research grants, the astute University administrator said today many researchers and research organizations and Universities are unable to benefits from grants particularly from international research funding organizations because of poor capacity in grants proposal writing. Ogunruku also alluded to poor quality and obsolete theses as part of the militating factors against accessing grants. He thus called on researchers to keep pace with new trends in their areas of research interests and academic pursuits.

Mr. Ogunruku also emphasized creativity and innovativeness in researching. Warning against the practice of plagiarism he said "where plagiarism takes the front burner in the output of an institution, it loses credibility and such dark spotting leads to disfavor in terms of funding. The reputation that comes from original intellectual works is certainly sine qua non for good relationship with international funding

agencies. It is known that once one of the international donor agencies forms a negative opinion about an individual, his institution gets a back lash and other researchers from the institution are stigmatized”.

On the relevance of the use of the internet to research activities, Mr. Ogunraku encouraged researchers to avail themselves of the constant use of ICT because “the academician of the 21st Century is not one who is a local champion but one who has reference across the globe. The World Wide Web brings a lot of information to the individual that acquaints him/herself with the latest information on any field of study and which in turn makes him/her current and globally competitive “. He added. While addressing the issue of funding research in Nigeria, Mr. Ogunraku said for the federal government to truly progress in its transformation agenda and achieve its vision 20:2020, she should be committed to the principles of a knowledge economy where science, technology and innovation will drive the nation’s strategies for transformation. He said “The major plank for attaining economic development such that can launch our nation to the vortex of knowledge driven economies of the 21st century is greater commitment to funding research and innovation in our Universities and other research institutions”.

He also advocated needful collaboration between the University and the industry. This is achievable if industries can constantly fund Universities to assist them in conducting research into new areas that can facilitate innovation. Such funding will provide the state of the art equipment for research, equip the academia with new knowledge, create innovativeness and advance the reputation of the University. Closing his lecture, Ogunraku admonished CERAD to more towards having an articulated research policy for the University that will be in tune with global best practices and also begin a drive for the patenting of innovative research works and outputs from the University. He also called on the University management to increase allocation to research and urged Universities and research Centres to commit themselves to business not as usual in addressing societal demands.

In his address, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Adebisi Daramola, represented by the Dean, School of Post Graduate Studies and Chairman, Committee of Deans, Professor M.A.K. Smith said FUTA is not relenting in collaborating with reputable foreign and local institutions in research efforts. He said the University encourages mentorship for the young academic to keep them abreast of proposal writing for local and international research funds access. Addressing the young academics, he said “I hope our junior academic will tap into the effort to build research activities in the University to help solve the problem in the society. As a University, the society looks up to us for solution to problems. We must not disappoint”.

Speaking earlier, Director, CERAD, Professor Tom Ofuya said the Centres’ mandate is to organize lectures and seminars which it has sustained over the years. At the lecture, former Directors of the Centre were honoured. They are; Vice-Chancellor, Elizade University, Ilara Mokin, Professor Valentine Aletor, Dean, School of Earth & Mineral Sciences, SEMS, Professor Idowu Odeyemi and Director, FUTA BDC, Professor Adegboyega Oguntade.