

COMMERCIALIZING RESEARCH & INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN NIGERIA

WEBINAR REPORT

JULY 2026



1.0 Executive Summary

The webinar on *“Commercializing Research and Innovation for Sustainable Growth in Nigeria”* brought together stakeholders from academia, government, industry, finance, and the innovation ecosystem to examine the persistent gap between research generation and practical commercialization in Nigeria. Discussions focused on how research institutions can move beyond academic publication to create commercially viable products, services, technologies, and enterprises that contribute to industrial development and national economic growth.

The discussions highlighted several critical barriers to commercialization, including weak linkages between academia and industry, inadequate protection and utilization of intellectual property, limited access to appropriate financing, insufficient research infrastructure, misaligned institutional incentives, and fragmented leadership across the innovation ecosystem. Stakeholders also identified practical pathways for addressing these challenges. These include strengthening university-based innovation hubs, promoting demand-driven research, expanding industry-sponsored research, improving intellectual property protection and technology transfer, establishing patient financing mechanisms for innovation, reforming academic reward systems, and creating structured platforms for sustained collaboration among government, academia, industry, investors, regulators, and entrepreneurs.

The overall consensus was that Nigeria possesses significant research and intellectual capacity, but sustainable growth will depend on the country's ability to systematically convert that capacity into market-oriented innovations, competitive enterprises, employment opportunities, and measurable societal impact.



2.0 Opening Session

2.1 Welcome Address

The webinar commenced with a welcome address that emphasized the growing importance of research, innovation and technology commercialization to Nigeria's economic transformation and industrial development. Participants were drawn from diverse segments of the innovation ecosystem, including government institutions, universities, research organizations, development finance institutions, manufacturers, private sector organizations and innovation support institutions.

The broad representation reflected the multidisciplinary nature of commercialization and the need for coordinated action among stakeholders. The opening remarks noted that Nigeria has invested considerably in higher education and research but continues to face difficulties in converting research outputs into economic value. Many research findings are successfully published and documented but do not proceed into product development, enterprise creation, technology licensing or industrial adoption. The session therefore established the need to rethink the relationship between research and economic development.

Research institutions should not only serve as centers for knowledge generation but should also become important contributors to entrepreneurship, innovation, industrial development and problem-solving. The speakers emphasized that the transition from research to commercialization requires more than the availability of good ideas. It requires an ecosystem capable of providing researchers with access to intellectual property support, research infrastructure, finance, technical expertise, market information, business development support and industry partnerships. The opening session consequently set the tone for the discussions by emphasizing that sustainable industrial growth will depend increasingly on Nigeria's ability to transform knowledge into commercially useful solutions.

2.2 Opening Context

The opening context established research commercialization as an important economic necessity for Nigeria. Participants noted that countries that have successfully transformed their economies through technology and innovation have generally developed systems that connect universities and research institutions with industry, investors and government. Within such systems, universities generate knowledge and technological solutions; industries identify market and production needs; investors provide capital; governments establish policies and incentives; while regulators provide the institutional framework for technology transfer and intellectual property protection.

The webinar sought to examine how similar linkages could be strengthened in Nigeria. The discussions recognized that the commercialization process is complex and extends across several stages. An idea generated by a researcher may require additional research, prototype development, intellectual property protection, testing, certification, financing, market validation and business development before it becomes a commercially viable product. The inability to effectively support these stages creates gaps within the innovation ecosystem. The webinar therefore focused on identifying practical interventions capable of addressing these gaps.



2.3 Keynote Address:

Technology Incubation as a Catalyst for Research Commercialization and Enterprise Development in Nigeria

The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Tukura Zakaria, Director (Procurement), on behalf of the Director-General/Chief Executive Officer of the National Board for Technology Incubation (NBTI), Engr. Dr. Kazeem Kolawole Raji. The address, titled ***“From Laboratory to Market: The Role of Technology Incubation in Research Commercialization and Enterprise Development in Nigeria,”*** emphasized that Nigeria’s challenge is not a lack of research, talent or innovative ideas, but the difficulty of moving valuable research outputs beyond laboratories, academic publications and conference proceedings into the marketplace. The speaker described this gap between innovation and commercialization as both an economic challenge and an imperative for national development. Drawing on the role of research in driving major technological and economic advances, the keynote speaker noted that Nigeria’s universities, research institutes and innovation centres continue to generate valuable knowledge and practical solutions in agriculture, healthcare, engineering, information technology and manufacturing.

However, research achieves its greatest value when it is translated into products that solve real problems, businesses that create wealth and technologies that strengthen national development. Research commercialization was therefore presented as the pathway through which scientific discoveries can generate economic value, attract investment, stimulate local production, create employment and improve citizens’ quality of life. The address further emphasized that Nigeria possesses important ingredients for becoming an innovation-driven economy, including a large youthful population, a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem and substantial research capacity. What remains essential is a stronger connection among research institutions, industry, investors and government so that promising innovations can successfully reach the market. The speaker noted that government reforms aimed at strengthening macroeconomic stability, investor confidence and private-sector-led growth can provide an enabling foundation, but emphasized that policies alone cannot complete the journey from concept to commercialization.

Technology incubation was presented as a critical institutional mechanism for bridging this gap. According to the keynote, many promising innovations fail because innovators encounter limited access to finance, inadequate business-management skills, weak market linkages and insufficient technical support. Technology incubation provides an environment where ideas can be refined, prototypes improved, businesses nurtured and innovations prepared for commercial success. Beyond physical workspace, incubation provides mentorship, business development services, technical guidance, networking opportunities and access to strategic partnerships.

The keynote highlighted the strategic role of the National Board for Technology Incubation, which has, for over three decades, supported technology-based entrepreneurship and indigenous innovation through its network of Technology Incubation Centres across Nigeria. NBTI was described as a bridge connecting researchers, innovators, entrepreneurs, investors, financial institutions and industry. Through this ecosystem approach, the Board seeks to help innovative ideas develop into sustainable businesses capable of creating employment, generating wealth and contributing to national industrial growth. The speaker also highlighted NBTI's efforts to reposition technology incubation as a tool for economic diversification and youth empowerment through stronger collaboration with universities, research institutions, development partners and the private sector.

The NextGen Innovation Challenge was cited as an initiative designed to identify, mentor and showcase exceptional Nigerian innovators, while providing young innovators with expert guidance and national and international exposure. The initiative was presented as evidence of the innovative capacity of Nigerian youths when appropriate institutional support is provided. Looking ahead, the keynote identified several priorities for strengthening Nigeria's research commercialization ecosystem.

These include deeper collaboration between academia and industry, continued investment in technology incubation and entrepreneurship development, expanded access to mentorship and business advisory services, and stronger financing partnerships involving government, development finance institutions, commercial banks, venture capital firms and the private sector. The address also stressed the need for a stronger intellectual property ecosystem to enable researchers and innovators to protect inventions through patents, trademarks and other intellectual property rights, thereby encouraging creativity, attracting investment and supporting the commercialization of indigenous technologies. The address placed particular emphasis on Nigeria's youthful population as a major national asset. Equipping young people with appropriate skills, encouraging creativity and providing opportunities for innovation and enterprise were identified as essential to developing the next generation of entrepreneurs and technology leaders.

The speaker stressed that responsibility for building an innovation-driven economy is shared: government must provide enabling policies, academic institutions must produce market-relevant research, industry must embrace local innovation, financial institutions must support promising enterprises, and institutions such as NBTI must continue to bridge the gap between research, entrepreneurship and the marketplace. In conclusion, the keynote reinforced that Nigeria's future prosperity will not be determined solely by the quantity of research produced, but by the country's ability to transform research into products, enterprises and industries that create value for society.

The journey from laboratory to market was framed as a progression from ideas to innovation, from innovation to enterprise, and from enterprise to national development. NBTI reaffirmed its commitment to working with government, academia, industry and development partners to create an enabling environment in which Nigerian innovations can contribute meaningfully to industrialization, job creation, national competitiveness and sustainable economic growth.

3.0 Session 1: Intellectual Property Protection and Commercialization of Indigenous Research

3.1 The Role of NOTAP in Research Commercialization

A representative of the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP) provided an overview of the agency's mandate and its strategic efforts to strengthen Nigeria's innovation ecosystem through technology acquisition, intellectual property protection, and the commercialization of indigenous research. The speaker explained that NOTAP's core responsibility is to regulate the acquisition of foreign technologies entering Nigeria while simultaneously promoting the development and commercialization of indigenous technologies. Through its role in registering technology transfer agreements, the agency has recognized that intellectual property (IP) is a critical driver of economic development and industrial competitiveness. He noted that many of the technology transfer agreements registered by NOTAP involve industrial property rights such as patents, trademarks, and copyrights, which are imported and utilized by manufacturing industries to support production processes.

However, the agency has observed that imported technologies often require adaptation to suit Nigeria's local environment and industrial needs. This realization has reinforced the importance of building local technological capabilities and encouraging home-grown innovation. The speaker emphasized that innovation begins with creative ideas and that protecting these ideas through appropriate intellectual property rights is essential. According to him, innovations only attain commercial value when they are legally protected, as intellectual property protection enables inventors to establish ownership, attract investment, and successfully commercialize their products and services. He stressed that in today's rapidly evolving technological landscape, protecting innovative ideas has become indispensable for sustainable economic growth.



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3.2 NOTAP Industry Fellowship Programme and Industry Linkages

To advance indigenous technology development, NOTAP has introduced several programmes aimed at supporting innovators, researchers, and industry. One of its flagship initiatives is the NOTAP Industry Fellowship Programme, which encourages private sector organizations to sponsor doctoral research aligned with their technological and business needs as part of their corporate social responsibility initiatives. Rather than limiting CSR to conventional community projects, the programme promotes investment in research and innovation that directly addresses industry challenges.

The speaker explained that under the fellowship programme, NOTAP works closely with industries to identify priority research areas and facilitates the selection of qualified PhD candidates whose research aligns with those needs. This collaborative approach ensures that research outputs are demand-driven and increases the likelihood of industry adoption and commercialization upon completion. He cited the successful development of a baby weaning meal formulation through one of the fellowship projects as an example of effective collaboration between academia and industry.

The sponsoring manufacturing company supported the research, accepted the final outcome, and entered into agreements regarding intellectual property ownership and patenting, with the intention of commercializing the innovation. He noted that although the programme has supported just over twenty research students so far, it represents a significant step towards strengthening linkages between research institutions and industry.

Beyond research sponsorship, the speaker highlighted NOTAP's advocacy for industries to establish and equip modern laboratories within Nigerian tertiary institutions. He explained that access to state-of-the-art research facilities would reduce the need for researchers to conduct expensive aspects of their work abroad, lower research costs, and improve the quality and competitiveness of locally conducted research.

Such investments would also strengthen national research infrastructure and foster greater collaboration among universities and research institutions. In concluding this segment, the speaker noted that NOTAP is also implementing initiatives targeted at younger innovators, recognizing Nigeria's large youth population as a strategic asset for future technological advancement. He stressed that building innovation capacity from the grassroots is essential for creating a sustainable pipeline of researchers, inventors, and entrepreneurs capable of driving Nigeria's industrial and economic transformation.

4.0 Session 2: Financing Research, Innovation and Commercialization

4.1 The Financing Gap and the Technology Readiness Level Challenge

A representative of the Bank of Industry (BOI), from the Strategy, Policy and Research Division, represented the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Olasupo Olusi, who was unable to attend the event due to his participation in the Annual Conference of the Association of Development Finance Institutions in Nigeria, where he serves as Chairman.

The representative explained that although the Bank had prepared a detailed presentation, the panel discussion format provided an opportunity to focus directly on the critical role of access to finance in bridging the gap between research and commercialization.

He emphasized that financing is one of the most important enablers in transforming research ideas into marketable products and services. According to him, many promising innovations fail during the Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) 4–6, commonly referred to as the “Valley of Death,” where research must transition from academic publications to proof of concept, prototype development, product validation, and eventual commercialization. He noted that without adequate financial support at this stage, many innovative ideas generated by Nigerian universities and research institutions never reach the marketplace.

4.2 Bank of Industry Innovation Financing Initiatives

The speaker highlighted the Bank of Industry’s strategic role as Nigeria’s foremost development finance institution in addressing this challenge. Unlike commercial banks, which often require established proof of concept and lower-risk investments before providing funding, the Bank of Industry adopts a developmental approach that recognizes the unique financing needs of innovation-driven enterprises and early-stage technologies.

To bridge this financing gap, he disclosed that the Bank has established the Industrial Innovation Fund, with a target capitalization of ₦50 billion and an initial funding allocation of ₦2 billion. The fund is specifically designed to support innovative, commercially viable projects capable of contributing to Nigeria’s industrial and economic development.

He further explained that the Bank is implementing the fund through strategic partnerships with key innovation institutions, including the National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure (NASENI), National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP), and the Raw Materials Research and Development Council (RMRDC). These collaborations are intended to identify, screen, and develop bankable research projects that are ready for commercialization and capable of attracting investment.

In addition to supporting research commercialization, the speaker noted that the Bank is implementing an entrepreneurship financing initiative in collaboration with venture capital firms and private sector partners. The programme is targeted at university student entrepreneurs, providing financial support and mentorship to enable them to transform innovative ideas into sustainable startup businesses. He reported that the initiative has already begun yielding encouraging results, with positive feedback from beneficiaries regarding its impact.

In concluding, the representative reaffirmed that access to finance remains a fundamental pillar of Nigeria’s innovation ecosystem. He stressed that without patient, innovation-focused financing mechanisms, research outputs would continue to remain within academic institutions rather than translating into commercially viable products, competitive industries, job creation, and sustainable economic growth. He reiterated the Bank of Industry’s commitment to working with government agencies, research institutions, and private sector partners to ensure that innovative ideas are successfully commercialized for national development.



5.0 Session 3: Industry-Academia Linkages and Demand-Driven Research

5.1 Manufacturers' Perspective on Research and Industrial Needs

A representative of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), Mr. Gina Sonde, Liaison Manager of the Association's Abuja Office, represented the Director General, Segun Ajayi-Kadir, and shared the perspective of the manufacturing sector on the commercialization of research and innovation in Nigeria. The speaker reaffirmed the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria's longstanding advocacy for backward integration, emphasizing the need for manufacturers to source not only raw materials but also technologies and innovative solutions locally.

He noted that achieving this objective would significantly reduce dependence on imported technologies, strengthen domestic industrial capacity, and enhance the competitiveness of Nigerian manufacturers. While acknowledging that Nigeria possesses the intellectual and technical capacity to develop indigenous technologies, he observed that the country has yet to fully harness this potential. According to him, one of the most significant barriers is the weak linkage between industry and research institutions. He explained that collaboration between manufacturers, universities, and research institutes remains insufficient, resulting in many research outputs that do not address the real needs of industry.

The representative stressed that research should not be conducted solely for academic purposes but should be driven by clearly identified industrial challenges. He advocated for a demand-driven approach in which manufacturers, as the end users of innovation, define the technological gaps and production challenges requiring solutions. Such collaboration, he noted, would ensure that research efforts are aligned with market demand, thereby increasing the likelihood of commercialization and industry uptake.

He further explained that when industries are actively involved in defining research priorities, commercialization becomes significantly easier because there is already a ready market for the resulting innovations. This approach would also reduce the incidence of research outcomes that remain on the shelves due to a lack of practical relevance or commercial application.

The speaker also identified inadequate funding as a major obstacle to innovation commercialization. Although he welcomed the assurance from the Bank of Industry regarding the availability of innovation financing, he observed that research and product development are highly capitalintensive processes requiring sustained investment. Funding is needed at every stage of the innovation cycle, including prototype development, product testing, certification, regulatory compliance, and market entry. He noted that the availability of dedicated financing would encourage more researchers and innovators to develop commercially viable products capable of meeting industry needs.

Another challenge highlighted was the high cost of locally developed innovations. While manufacturers strongly support the adoption of indigenous technologies, they remain highly sensitive to production costs and market competitiveness. He explained that many locally commercialized innovations are often more expensive than imported alternatives, largely due to the high cost of research, production, and operating within Nigeria's business environment. He therefore called on government to implement policies that would reduce production costs and create a more enabling environment for innovation, thereby making locally developed technologies more affordable and attractive to manufacturers.

In concluding, the representative emphasized that sustainable industrial growth cannot be achieved through continued dependence on foreign technologies. He warned that excessive reliance on imported technologies exposes Nigeria's manufacturing sector to global disruptions, including geopolitical conflicts and supply chain shocks. He therefore called for greater investment in indigenous innovation, stronger collaboration between industry and academia, increased funding for commercialization, and policies that support the affordability and competitiveness of locally developed technologies. According to him, these measures are essential for building a resilient manufacturing sector and positioning Nigeria as a globally competitive industrial economy.

The Bank of Industry (BOI) recorded its highest intervention ever in 2025 by disbursing ₦636 billion to over 7,000 businesses across Nigeria, creating and retaining 1.68 million jobs.

BOI distributed its financial interventions to reach both grassroots traders and large corporations:

- Large Enterprises: ₦375 billion.
- SMEs: ₦178 billion.
- Nano Enterprises: ₦51 billion.
- Micro Businesses: ₦32 billion

6.0 Session 4: Leadership, Institutional Reform and Ecosystem Coordination

6.1 Strategic Alignment as a Core Institutional Challenge



Mr. Okolu, speaking from the perspective of both the private sector and academia, described the commercialization of research as a national development issue that requires stronger leadership, institutional reforms, and coordinated action across the innovation ecosystem. He observed that while the topic has been discussed extensively over the years, Nigeria continues to face systemic barriers that prevent research outputs from successfully transitioning from laboratories to the marketplace. Addressing the question on the major institutional and leadership failures hindering commercialization, he identified failure of strategic alignment as the foremost challenge.

According to him, universities, industry, government, and investors often pursue different objectives using different performance metrics. Universities are primarily rewarded for generating knowledge through publications, industries focus on profitability and competitiveness, governments emphasize policy formulation and implementation, while investors seek returns on investment. As a result, each stakeholder may achieve its institutional goals independently, yet the country loses collectively because these efforts are poorly aligned. He noted that researchers frequently pursue topics driven by scientific curiosity and publication requirements rather than industry demand.

To bridge this gap, he advocated for a co-created research model in which industries participate from the outset by defining research priorities, supervising applied research, validating prototypes, and identifying market opportunities. He emphasized that the problem is not that Nigerian universities produce too much research, but rather that industry is often engaged only at the end of the research process instead of at its inception.

6.2 Reforming Institutional Incentives for Research Impact

The second challenge identified was the failure of institutional incentives. The speaker argued that existing university promotion systems overwhelmingly reward publications, conference papers, and academic citations while giving little recognition to patents, technology transfer, commercialization, startup creation, licensing agreements, or measurable societal impact. Consequently, researchers naturally prioritize activities that advance their academic careers rather than those that generate economic value.

To address this imbalance, he recommended that universities adopt a balanced research impact framework that evaluates both academic excellence and real-world outcomes. Such a framework, he suggested, should incorporate commercialization achievements, industry partnerships, policy influence, patents, startup creation, industry-funded research, and job creation into promotion and performance evaluation systems. He stressed that researchers respond to incentives, and unless institutions deliberately reward innovation and commercialization, research impact will remain limited.

6.3 Strengthening Collaborative Leadership

The third major challenge, according to the speaker, is the failure of collaborative leadership. He observed that responsibility for commercialization is often shifted among stakeholders, with universities expecting industry to commercialize research, industries expecting government to create incentives, governments expecting universities to deliver market-ready technologies, and investors waiting until innovations have already become commercially viable before committing resources.

This fragmented approach, he argued, has prevented the emergence of a cohesive innovation ecosystem. He emphasized that commercialization requires ecosystem leadership rather than isolated institutional leadership, calling on all stakeholders to embrace shared ownership of the innovation process from research conception to market deployment. He proposed the establishment of structured innovation platforms that would bring together universities, industries, government agencies, investors, regulators, entrepreneurs, and researchers to jointly design commercialization pathways, coordinate investments, and share accountability for outcomes. Such long-term partnerships, he argued, would be more effective than occasional conferences or isolated initiatives.

In his concluding remarks, the speaker asserted that Nigeria's greatest challenge is not a lack of research capacity but a failure of leadership in connecting research to markets. He maintained that the country possesses significant intellectual and research capabilities, but these have not translated into widespread economic value because institutional systems continue to reward academic outputs more than practical impact, while collaboration among key stakeholders remains weak. He stressed that sustainable commercialization would only be achieved when universities, industry, government, investors, and regulators begin to function as an integrated innovation ecosystem with shared priorities, coordinated actions, and collective responsibility for national development.

7.0 Practical Framework for a Sustainable Research Commercialization Ecosystem

Building on his earlier remarks, the speaker proposed a framework for strengthening Nigeria's research commercialization ecosystem through better alignment of national priorities, institutional incentives, and cross-sector collaboration.



7.1 Aligning Research with National Development Priorities

He emphasized the need to align research priorities with national development goals and industry needs. While acknowledging that industries may not always clearly articulate their research requirements, he argued that an even greater challenge is the absence of clearly defined and prioritized national research agendas. According to him, government has a critical role in identifying strategic sectors that require innovation and directing research efforts towards addressing those priorities.

As an illustration, he suggested that government could identify critical national challenges—such as water quality, waterborne diseases, or neglected tropical diseases—and designate them as priority research areas for a defined period. By providing dedicated funding and inviting researchers, universities, and innovators to align their work with these national priorities, government would create a focused research ecosystem capable of generating practical solutions to pressing societal challenges.

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7.2 Measuring Research by Societal and Economic Impact

The speaker further advocated for the alignment of institutional incentives to ensure that universities and research institutions are accountable not only for the knowledge they generate but also for the measurable impact of their research on society and the economy. He stressed that research outcomes should be systematically monitored and evaluated based on their contribution to solving real-world problems rather than solely on academic outputs.

7.3 Establishing Enduring Cross-Sector Partnerships

He also reiterated the importance of establishing enduring partnerships among academia, industry, government, investors, and entrepreneurs. He noted that sustainable commercialization requires coordinated leadership, with a dedicated institution or platform responsible for convening stakeholders, maintaining collaboration, and ensuring that all parties remain aligned with shared objectives. Such alliances, he explained, would strengthen accountability, improve coordination, and ensure that research priorities remain relevant to national development and industrial competitiveness.

The speaker concluded by returning to the issue of academic reward systems, observing that many researchers continue to regard publication as the ultimate objective because existing promotion criteria reinforce that perception. He argued that universities should adopt broader performance metrics that recognize patents, commercialization, technology transfer, startup creation, industry collaboration, and other measurable societal impacts alongside scholarly publications. According to him, expanding promotion criteria beyond publications would encourage researchers to pursue innovations with greater economic and developmental value, thereby accelerating the commercialization of research in Nigeria.



8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the keynote address, presentations and stakeholder discussions, participants identified the following recommendations for strengthening research commercialization and supporting sustainable industrial growth in Nigeria:

1 **Strengthen national policies that promote research commercialization and innovation-driven industrialization.**

Government should develop clear and coordinated policies that provide an enabling environment for research commercialization, technology transfer, innovation and private-sector participation. A National Roadmap or Framework for Research Commercialization

2 **Align research priorities with industry and national development needs.**

Research institutions and universities should increasingly align research priorities with identified national development challenges and the technological needs of industry. Manufacturers and private-sector organizations should be involved from the early stages of research to ensure that research outputs respond to practical market and industrial needs.

3 **Strengthen collaboration among government, academia, industry, investors and research institutions.**

A more coordinated innovation ecosystem is required to bridge the gap between research and commercialization. Stakeholders should move beyond occasional engagements towards sustained partnerships that support research development, prototype validation, technology transfer, financing and market deployment.

4 **Establish and expand dedicated financing mechanisms for research commercialization.**

Government, development finance institutions, commercial banks, investors and private-sector organizations should provide dedicated financing windows for innovation-driven enterprises. Financing should support different stages of the commercialization process, including research development, proof of concept, prototyping, testing, certification, incubation and market entry.

5 **Strengthen technology incubation and enterprise development support**

Technology incubation centres should receive increased institutional and financial support to enable them to effectively support researchers, innovators and technology-based entrepreneurs. As highlighted by NBTI, incubation should provide more than physical workspace by offering mentorship, technical guidance, business development services, networking, strategic partnerships and market linkages that help promising innovations progress towards sustainable enterprises.

6 **Strengthen Technology Transfer Offices and intellectual property systems**

Universities and research institutions should strengthen Technology Transfer Offices and provide researchers with better support for protecting and commercializing intellectual property. Patents, trademarks and other intellectual property rights should be integrated into the commercialization process to protect innovations, attract investment and facilitate licensing and technology transfer.

- 7 Reform academic incentive systems to recognize commercialization outcomes.**
 Universities and research institutions should review promotion and performance evaluation systems to recognize patents, technology transfer, commercialization, startup creation, industry collaboration and measurable societal impact alongside academic publications. This will encourage researchers to pursue innovations that generate practical economic and developmental value.
- 8 Increase private-sector investment in research and development.**
 Manufacturers and other private-sector organizations should be encouraged to invest more actively in research and development and collaborate with universities and research institutions in developing solutions to identified industrial challenges. Greater private-sector participation will also create a clearer pathway for successful innovations to reach the market.
- 9 Improve research infrastructure, prototyping and product development capacity.**
 Government, industry and development partners should support the development of modern laboratories, prototyping facilities, testing centres and other infrastructure required to move research from the laboratory to commercialization. This will reduce barriers to product development and improve the competitiveness of locally developed technologies.
- 10 Support youth innovation and entrepreneurship.**
 Greater attention should be given to young researchers, innovators and entrepreneurs through incubation, mentorship, enterprise development, skills development and access to finance. The NBTI presentation highlighted the potential of structured initiatives such as the NextGen Innovation Challenge to identify and support young Nigerian innovators.
- 11 Improve access to markets for locally developed innovations**
 Government and industry should support viable Nigerian innovations through product validation, certification, procurement opportunities, industry partnerships and other appropriate mechanisms that can help locally developed technologies move from prototypes to commercial deployment.
- 12 Strengthen institutional and regulatory coordination.**
 Relevant government agencies should improve coordination and harmonize policies relating to research, intellectual property, technology acquisition, technology transfer, innovation and commercialization. Clear regulatory pathways will reduce institutional bottlenecks and encourage greater participation by researchers, investors and industry.
- 13 Increase support from development partners and international institutions.**
 Development partners should support capacity building, innovation ecosystems, technology exchange, research partnerships and commercialization programmes. International collaboration should complement national efforts to strengthen Nigeria's research and innovation capacity.
- 14 Increase support from development partners and international institutions.**
 The Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry, through the National Policy Advocacy Centre, should continue convening stakeholders through the proposed National Forum on Commercialising Research and Innovation for Sustainable Industrial Growth.

9.0 CONCLUSION



The webinar demonstrated that Nigeria possesses significant research capacity, talented researchers, innovative entrepreneurs and institutions capable of contributing to an innovation-driven economy.

However, the discussions also highlighted the persistent gap between research generation and commercial application. Many valuable research outputs continue to face challenges related to weak industry linkages, inadequate financing, limited technology transfer mechanisms, intellectual property constraints, insufficient commercialization support and institutional incentives that often prioritize academic publications over practical impact.

The discussions therefore emphasized that research commercialization must become a shared national responsibility involving government, academia, industry, financial institutions, investors, research institutions, technology incubation centres and development partners. No single institution can successfully address the commercialization gap in isolation. Stronger collaboration and clearly defined responsibilities across the innovation ecosystem are necessary to ensure that research outputs are developed into products, technologies, enterprises and solutions that respond to Nigeria's economic and societal needs.

The NBTI keynote added an important dimension to this discussion by demonstrating the role of technology incubation in bridging the gap between research and enterprise development. While research may generate promising ideas and discoveries, innovators often require technical support, mentorship, business development assistance, financing, market linkages and strategic partnerships before those ideas can become sustainable businesses. NBTI's experience with technology incubation therefore reinforces the need for stronger institutional mechanisms that can support innovators beyond the research stage and guide them towards commercialization.

The webinar also reinforced the importance of ensuring that research is demand-driven and connected to industry. Manufacturers and private-sector organizations should participate more actively in identifying research priorities, validating solutions and supporting product development. At the same time, universities and research institutions should be encouraged to recognize commercialization, technology transfer, patents, entrepreneurship and societal impact as important dimensions of research excellence.

Access to finance remains another critical requirement. The discussions showed that promising innovations can fail to reach the market when researchers and entrepreneurs are unable to secure the funding required for prototyping, testing, certification, product development and commercialization.

Sustainable financing mechanisms, including patient capital and innovation-focused funding, are therefore necessary to support innovations through the different stages of their development. The webinar further recognized the importance of intellectual property protection and technology transfer. Researchers and innovators need stronger institutional support to protect their inventions and negotiate appropriate pathways for licensing, partnerships and commercialization.

Strengthening Technology Transfer Offices and improving coordination among relevant government agencies will be essential to ensuring that intellectual property generated within Nigerian institutions translates into economic value.

Equally important is the development of Nigeria's human capital. The country's youthful population presents a significant opportunity for innovation and entrepreneurship. Providing young Nigerians with appropriate skills, incubation, mentorship, financing and market opportunities can create a stronger pipeline of innovators and technology-driven enterprises capable of contributing to industrial development.

Ultimately, the discussions affirmed that research only creates its full national value when it successfully moves from knowledge to application and from application to economic and societal impact. Effective commercialization has the potential to accelerate industrialization, diversify the Nigerian economy, reduce dependence on imported technologies, strengthen indigenous manufacturing, create sustainable employment, attract investment and improve the competitiveness of Nigerian businesses.

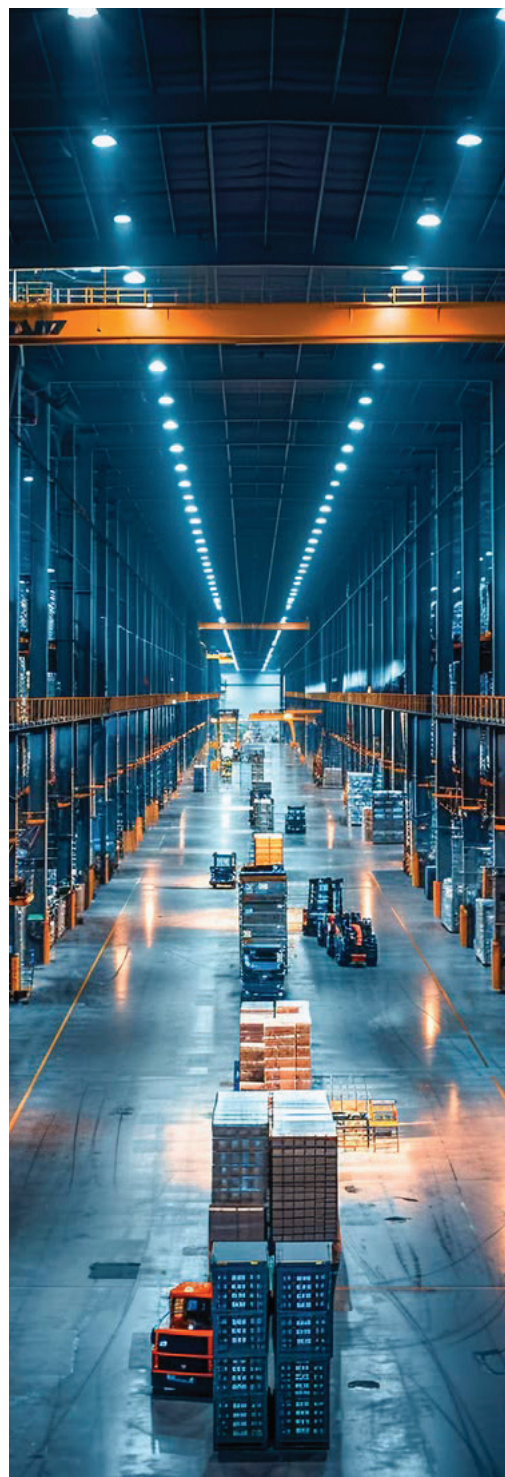


The webinar therefore concluded that Nigeria's transition towards an innovation-driven economy requires coordinated policy action, stronger academia–industry collaboration, sustainable financing, effective technology transfer, strengthened incubation systems, improved research infrastructure and institutional leadership. These interventions must be sustained rather than implemented as isolated initiatives.

In this regard, the proposed National Forum on Commercialising Research and Innovation for Sustainable Industrial Growth provides an important opportunity to maintain the momentum generated by the webinar. The Forum can serve as a platform for continued engagement among government, academia, industry, investors, innovators, financial institutions and development partners, while translating the recommendations from the webinar into practical programmes, partnerships and policy interventions.

The Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry, through the National Policy Advocacy Centre, reaffirmed its commitment to sustaining this conversation and supporting stronger collaboration between the public and private sectors. The communiqué similarly emphasizes ACCI's role in continuing policy dialogue, coordinating stakeholder engagement and advancing the proposed National Forum.

The central message from the webinar is therefore clear: Nigeria does not only need to produce more research; it needs to build the systems, partnerships and market pathways required to ensure that existing research and innovation are transformed into economic value. With sustained collaboration among stakeholders, the journey from laboratory to market can become a practical pathway from research to innovation, from innovation to enterprise, and from enterprise to sustainable industrial growth in Nigeria.



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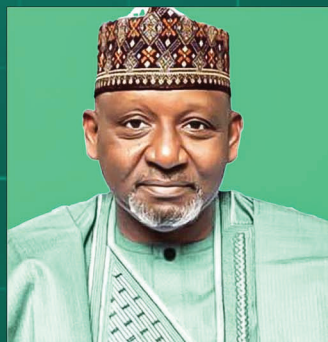
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