KARUNYA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCES

Identifying and Engaging with Local Stakeholders Policy

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PREAMBLE

Karunya Institute of Technology and Sciences (KITS) upholds the constitutional vision of equality, social justice and collective welfare as articulated in Articles 14, 15, 21, 38, 39, 41 and 243G of the Constitution of India.

KITS recognizes its institutional responsibility to serve society through compassion-driven scientific, technological and managerial interventions. Rooted in its mission of compassion ("Karunya"), the Institute strives to enhance the quality of life of neighbouring communities particularly the tribal, rural and economically weaker populations through technology dissemination, participatory education and capacity building.

This Policy institutionalizes structured mechanisms for identifying, engaging and empowering local stakeholders while aligning all outreach and development efforts with national mandates, AICTE, UGC directives and international sustainability benchmarks.

ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

This Policy is aligned with the following frameworks and directives:

- Constitution of India – Articles 14, 15, 21, 38, 39, 41 and 243G.
- National Education Policy (NEP 2020) – Experiential learning and social engagement.
- UGC Guidelines for Fostering Social Responsibility and Community Engagement in Higher Education Institutions in India 2.0 (2022).
- UGC Promotion of Equity Regulations (2012) and Grievance Redressal Regulations (2023).
- AICTE Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA) – Village adoption and rural innovation.
- Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) – Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana–National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (MGNREGA) awareness and rural capacity building.
- Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE) – Inclusion and equity initiatives.
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) – Tribal empowerment and educational outreach.
- NAAC, NBA/ABET Graduate Attributes, and NIRF Community Engagement Metrics.
- UNESCO ESD 2030 and UN SDGs (3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 17).
- Global Frameworks: QS Impact Rankings, THE Impact Rankings, and UI GreenMetric Sustainability Ranking.

RATIONALE

KITS is committed to innovation, community partnership and sustainable development. Meaningful engagement with local stakeholders is essential to foster social inclusion, promote technology dissemination and ensure equitable growth integral to the institution's mission and national development priorities.

Key Drivers:

1. Constitutional Compliance: Upholds the values of equality, justice, and environmental stewardship as enshrined in Articles 14, 15, 21, 38, 39, 41 and 243G of the Constitution of India.

2. National and Statutory Frameworks: Aligns with directives from UGC, AICTE and MoE/MHRD, including the UGC Guidelines for Fostering Social Responsibility and Community Engagement (2021) and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 on experiential learning and social responsibility.

3. Institutional Social Responsibility and Extension Mandate: Promotes collaboration among the institution, local governance bodies, industries, NGOs and communities through the KITS Community – Academia Collaboration (CAC) and Centre for Extension activities (CEA) units for inclusive socio-economic transformation.

4. Support for Rural and Tribal Development: Advances empowerment through rural immersion, livelihood enhancement, women's entrepreneurship, health and hygiene awareness, environmental conservation and digital literacy particularly among vulnerable, tribal and underrepresented groups.

5. National and Global Accreditation Relevance: Strengthens institutional performance under NAAC Criterion 7 (Institutional Values and Best Practices), NBA/ABET ethical and societal outcomes, and enhances visibility in QS Impact Rankings, THE Impact Rankings and UI GreenMetric Sustainability Rankings.

6. Alignment with National Missions: Contributes to Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA), Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, Swachh Bharat Mission, Digital India and Skill India through field projects, research translation and technology transfer.

7. Alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals: Aligns with SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 11 (Sustainable Communities) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

8. Ethical Governance, Transparency, and Accountability: Promotes ethical leadership, transparent project management, responsible resource utilization and social auditing mechanisms for all stakeholder engagement activities.

9. Continuous Quality Enhancement: Integrates community engagement indicators, social responsibility performance metrics and sustainability goals into IQAC quality

audits, curriculum design and annual institutional reviews to ensure continuous improvement and measurable social impact.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Policy on Identifying and Engaging with Local Stakeholders establishes a structured, transparent and accountable framework for community partnership, social outreach and participatory development at KITS. Rooted in the institution's vision of Transforming Lives through Compassionate Innovation, the policy operationalizes KITS's social responsibility mandate by aligning education, research and technology with the needs of the community.

This policy seeks to ensure that the benefits of knowledge creation and technological advancement are equitably shared with rural, tribal and marginalized populations in the surrounding ecosystem. It provides clear mechanisms for identifying local stakeholders, defining engagement models, ensuring ethical collaboration and measuring social impact through verifiable indicators.

The framework integrates Constitutional values, national regulatory guidelines and global sustainability benchmarks, reflecting compliance with National and International standards.

The policy defines institutional roles, responsibilities and reporting hierarchies through the Directorate of Community–Academia Collaboration (CAC), Centre for Extension Activities (CEA) and the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), ensuring comprehensive monitoring, transparency and impact assessment.

By fostering collaborative partnerships with panchayats, NGOs, industries and government departments, KITS promotes innovation-driven rural transformation, environmental sustainability and lifelong learning.

This policy institutionalizes KITS's commitment to:

- Equitable stakeholder engagement;
- Sustainable, technology-enabled social impact;
- Transparent governance and ethical leadership; and
- Continuous quality enhancement through measurable community outcomes.

Through this policy, KITS reaffirms its role as a compassion-driven academic institution, dedicated to advancing social justice, sustainable development and national progress in alignment with global benchmarks.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Purpose:

The purpose of the Policy on Identifying and Engaging with Local Stakeholders is to establish a comprehensive and accountable institutional framework for fostering mutual collaboration between KITS and the surrounding communities, industries and governmental agencies.

This policy aims to:

- Institutionalize community engagement as a strategic and measurable dimension of teaching, research and extension activities.

- Strengthen participatory development by identifying local needs and designing context-specific interventions in education, livelihood, health, energy and environment.

- Promote inclusive growth and sustainable development in alignment with the Constitutional values of equality, justice, and environmental protection.

- Integrate national and global frameworks into institutional practice.

- Ensure transparency, accountability and impact measurement through structured planning, monitoring and documentation systems governed by the Community–Academia Collaboration (CAC) and the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC).

- Enhance KITS's contribution to national missions.

- Demonstrate institutional social responsibility in compliance with national and global benchmarks.

Scope:

This policy applies to all community-based, outreach, and stakeholder engagement initiatives undertaken by the institution and its constituent units, including faculty, students, research centres, administrative divisions and affiliated organizations.

The scope of the policy covers:

1. Stakeholder Identification:

   Mapping and categorizing local communities, NGOs, panchayats, industries, and other regional partners based on socio-economic and developmental parameters.

2. Modes of Engagement:

   Direct (field work, training, service-learning), collaborative (MoUs with government or NGOs) and indirect (research dissemination, awareness programs).

3. Geographical Coverage:

   Areas within and around Coimbatore district and adjoining rural, tribal, and semi-urban communities impacted by institutional outreach activities.

4. Institutional Units Involved:

   - Directorate of Community–Academia Collaboration (CAC)
   - Centre for Extension Activities (CEA)
   - National Service Scheme (NSS) and other student-led organizations

- Academic Departments and Research Centres integrating social innovation into curricula and projects

5. Stakeholder Categories:

- Local communities and self-help groups (SHGs)
- Panchayats and local governance bodies
- Government departments (MoRD, MoTA, MSJE, MoEFCC)
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society bodies
- Industries and social enterprises
- Students, faculty, and alumni volunteers

6. Programmatic Areas:

- Health and wellness initiatives
- Education and digital literacy
- Environmental conservation and renewable energy
- Livelihood and entrepreneurship development
- Water, sanitation, and hygiene programs
- Skill-building and vocational training
- Tribal, women, and youth empowerment initiatives

7. Reporting and Monitoring Framework:

All initiatives shall be monitored by CAC and IQAC and reported through Annual Community Impact Reports, Social Audits, and Sustainability Scorecards aligned with national and global ranking requirements.

DOCUMENT CONTROL & REVISION HISTORY

Policy Title	Identifying and Engaging with Local Stakeholder Policy
Reference Number	KITS/IELSP/2025/01
Version	1.0
Issue	02
Policy Created on	July 2022
Revision History	Revised on 29th August 2025 (28th IQAC Meeting).
Responsible Executives	Vice-Chancellor and Director (Quality Assurance & Accreditation)
Responsible Office	Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC)
Policy Review Frequency	Policy shall be reviewed every three years, or earlier if required by UGC, AICTE or other regulatory authorities.

The policy is described in the following articles

ARTICLE 1

STATEMENT OF POLICY

KITS affirms its unwavering commitment to compassion-driven education, social responsibility, and sustainable community development. The Institute recognizes that the creation and dissemination of knowledge must directly contribute to the advancement and well-being of society, especially the local, rural, and marginalized communities that form an integral part of its ecosystem.

Through this Policy on Identifying and Engaging with Local Stakeholders, KITS seeks to:

1. Establish a structured, inclusive, and transparent mechanism for identifying, collaborating with, and empowering local stakeholders.
2. Integrate community engagement and participatory development into the institution's core functions of teaching, research, and extension.
3. Promote equity, inclusivity, and sustainability in all outreach and developmental activities in line with Constitutional provisions and national frameworks.
4. Strengthen institutional partnerships with panchayats, NGOs, industries, and government bodies for collaborative socio-economic transformation.
5. Align stakeholder engagement with the goals of NEP 2020, UGC and AICTE (directives on social responsibility, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
6. Ensure accountability, ethical governance, and measurable impact through continuous monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems under the Community–Academia Collaboration (CAC) and Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC).

This policy thus serves as a formal institutional mandate to guide all community engagement, outreach, and social innovation efforts of KITS in compliance with national priorities, constitutional principles, and global sustainability standards.

ARTICLE 2

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The Policy on Identifying and Engaging with Local Stakeholders establishes a set of strategic and operational objectives to ensure that KITS effectively fulfils its social responsibility mandate through structured, measurable and sustainable engagement with the community.

The specific objectives of the policy are to:

1. Institutionalize Community Engagement
2. Promote Participatory Development
3. Integrate Academic and Social Missions
4. Ensure Constitutional and Ethical Compliance
5. Support Rural and Tribal Empowerment
6. Promote Sustainable Development and Environmental Consciousness
7. Strengthen Institutional Collaborations
8. Align with National Missions
9. Enhance Global Benchmarking and Accreditation

10. Establish Accountability and Measurable Impact
11. Advance UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

ARTICLE 3

POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Policy on Identifying and Engaging with Local Stakeholders is guided by the following core principles, which reflect the values of compassion, inclusivity, equity, transparency, and sustainability that underpin all activities of KITS.

These principles ensure that every community partnership, outreach initiative, and developmental intervention undertaken by KITS is legally sound, ethically driven, socially inclusive and globally benchmarked.

1. Constitutional and Legal Adherence
   - All stakeholder engagement activities shall comply with the Constitution of India, particularly Articles 14, 15, 21, 38, 39, 41 and 243G, ensuring equality, social justice, and environmental stewardship.
   - Institutional operations shall conform to relevant national acts, regulations, and ministry directives including those from UGC, AICTE, MoE/MHRD, MoRD, MSJE, and MoTA.

2. Inclusivity and Equity
   - Engagement shall be free from discrimination based on gender, caste, creed, ethnicity, religion, or socio-economic status.
   - Equal opportunity and representation shall be given to women, differently-abled persons, and underrepresented communities in all outreach initiatives.
   - Programs shall actively promote social cohesion and cultural respect within the local ecosystem.

3. Participatory and Collaborative Approach
   - Local stakeholders shall be partners in planning, decision-making, and implementation, ensuring mutual trust and accountability.
   - Collaboration shall extend across academia, government, industry, NGOs, and community bodies to achieve shared developmental goals.
   - All engagements shall prioritize co-creation of knowledge and capacity building rather than one-way dissemination

4. Transparency and Accountability
   - All stakeholder activities shall be conducted through open, auditable, and ethically governed processes.
   - Financial, operational, and outcome-related transparency shall be maintained in accordance with institutional audit and IQAC protocols.
   - Public disclosure of community engagement reports and impact metrics shall be made available through institutional channels.

5. Ethical Governance and Social Responsibility

- The policy upholds integrity, honesty, and fairness as non-negotiable standards for all community partnerships.
- Institutional members shall adhere to the Code of Ethics for Research and Community Interaction, ensuring dignity, privacy, and informed consent of beneficiaries.
- All interventions must reflect compassionate innovation—technological advancement rooted in human welfare.

6. Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship
   - Every community program shall incorporate principles of sustainability, conservation, and responsible resource use.
   - Engagements must align with the Environmental Protection Act (1986) and MoEFCC guidelines, and contribute to UI GreenMetric indicators.
   - The Institute shall promote awareness of renewable energy, waste reduction, and climate resilience within campus and community settings.

7. Knowledge Integration and Experiential Learning
   - Community engagement shall form an integral part of academic curricula, research, and innovation projects, in line with NEP 2020.
   - Faculty and students shall apply classroom learning to solve real-world societal problems, fostering experiential and service-learning cultures.
   - Outcomes shall contribute to both academic excellence and societal well-being.

8. Continuous Quality Improvement
   - Institutional mechanisms for feedback, evaluation, and social audit shall ensure continuous improvement in engagement practices.
   - Performance indicators shall be integrated into IQAC quality audits and accreditation processes (NAAC, NBA, ABET).
   - Community engagement data shall feed into institutional improvement plans, annual reports, and national/global ranking submissions (QS, THE, UI GreenMetric).

9. Alignment with National Missions and Global Goals
   - Activities shall reinforce India's national missions including Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, Atmanirbhar Bharat, Swachh Bharat, and Skill India.
   - The policy aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — particularly SDGs 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, and 17 — to ensure that KITS's local actions contribute to global sustainable development efforts.

ARTICLE 4

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure effective implementation of the Identifying and Engaging with Local Stakeholder Policy, the following roles and responsibilities are established:

1. Vice-Chancellor

- Provide strategic direction and leadership for the implementation of the policy.
- Approve stakeholder engagement plans, MoUs and collaborative frameworks.
- Ensure alignment of institutional initiatives with national missions, NEP 2020, and global sustainability goals.
- Review annual performance reports submitted by IQAC and the Directorate of Community–Academia Collaboration (CAC).

2. Registrar

- Oversee policy documentation, record-keeping, and compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks.
- Ensure that all community partnerships, MoUs, and financial transactions adhere to institutional governance norms.
- Facilitate the formation of committees and working groups for outreach coordination.
- Coordinate with IQAC for periodic audits and verification of stakeholder engagement data.

3. Directorate – Community–Academia Collaboration (CAC)

- Serve as the Nodal Officer for all community engagement and stakeholder programs.
- Identify, assess, and classify local stakeholders through socio-economic and environmental studies.
- Develop annual and long-term community engagement plans in consultation with academic and administrative units.
- Organize field visits, capacity-building workshops, and rural immersion programs.
- Maintain the Institutional Community Engagement Database and submit quarterly reports to IQAC.

4. Centre of Extension Activities (CEA)

- Implement training, literacy and entrepreneurship programs for local communities.
- Facilitate technology dissemination and innovation transfer aligned with community needs.
- Conduct short-term certificate courses and livelihood programs under the Skill India framework.
- Collaborate with government departments, NGOs, and local governance bodies for outreach projects.

5. Director – Student Affairs

- Promote student participation through NSS, social clubs, and volunteer initiatives.
- Integrate service-learning, internships, and community projects into co-curricular activities.
- Encourage youth leadership, civic engagement, and empathy-driven community service.
- Document student involvement and impact for inclusion in IQAC quality reports.

6. Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC)

- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the stakeholder engagement policy.
- Integrate community engagement data into NAAC, NIRF, QS, THE, and UI GreenMetric submissions.
- Conduct periodic social audits, impact evaluations, and compliance reviews.
- Recommend quality improvement measures and policy revisions to the Vice-Chancellor.

7. Faculty Members

- Integrate community-based learning and outreach components into teaching and research.
- Mentor student teams undertaking fieldwork, social innovation, or rural development projects.
- Collaborate with external partners on research and consultancy initiatives that benefit local stakeholders.
- Document and publish outcomes that demonstrate academic–societal integration.

8. Students

- Participate actively in service-learning, extension activities, and social innovation challenges.
- Serve as ambassadors of compassion, sustainability, and ethical responsibility in community settings.
- Contribute to environmental and social awareness campaigns under the KITS Outreach Program.

9. Local Stakeholders and Community Partners

- Collaborate with institutional teams in planning, implementation, and evaluation of community projects.
- Provide local insights, resources, and cultural perspectives for sustainable outcomes.
- Offer feedback for continuous improvement and co-ownership of initiatives.
- Ensure ethical cooperation and respect for institutional guidelines during partnership activities.

10. Finance Officer

- Facilitate budgeting, fund allocation, and utilization for stakeholder engagement activities.
- Maintain financial transparency and ensure adherence to audit requirements.
- Support mobilization of resources through CSR collaborations, grants, and sponsorships.

11. Public Relations and Media Cell

- Disseminate information about institutional community engagement through press releases, reports, and social media.
- Highlight impactful initiatives and success stories to enhance institutional reputation and stakeholder visibility.

12. Institutional Committees

- Support implementation through Community Engagement Committee, Sustainability Committee, and Ethics Committee.
- Evaluate project proposals, monitor progress, and ensure compliance with policy principles.
- Recommend corrective or enhancement measures based on periodic reviews.

13. Alumni and External Partners

- Act as mentors, donors, or collaborators in community engagement initiatives.
- Support institutional social responsibility programs through expertise and resource sharing.

ARTICLE 5

MONITORING & EVALUATION

5.1 Reporting:

- Each Department, Centre, and Unit involved in stakeholder engagement shall submit a quarterly activity report to the Director – Student Affairs.
- The CAC shall compile and review consolidated reports and forward them to the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) for validation.
- The Annual Community Impact and Sustainability Report shall be presented to the Vice-Chancellor and published through the institutional website.

5.2 Evaluation Process:

- Quarterly Review: Conducted by CAC and CEA based on progress indicators, stakeholder feedback, and project deliverables.
- Mid-Year Review: Jointly carried out by CAC and IQAC to assess alignment with institutional goals, social relevance, and budget utilization.
- Annual Evaluation: Chaired by the Vice-Chancellor to review the institutional performance against national frameworks (UGC, AICTE, NEP 2020) and global benchmarks (QS, THE, UI GreenMetric).
- Triennial Comprehensive Audit: Conducted in line with the institutional accreditation cycle or as mandated by regulatory agencies.

5.3 Performance Indicators

Evaluation shall be based on measurable performance indicators such as:

- Number of stakeholders engaged, beneficiaries reached, and villages adopted.
- Evidence of improvement in health, education, livelihood, or environmental outcomes.
- Level of faculty and student participation in outreach and service-learning programs.
- Degree of alignment with SDGs (3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, and 17).

- Documentation of partnerships, MoUs, and research outcomes linked to community engagement.
- Integration of community data into IQAC audits, NAAC Criterion 7, and global ranking submissions.

5.4 Corrective and Improvement Measures:

- Corrective actions shall be recommended by the IQAC in consultation with the Registrar and CAC, based on annual review outcomes.
- Identified gaps may lead to process revisions, reallocation of resources, or introduction of new training or awareness programs.
- Best practices and successful initiatives shall be documented, disseminated, and replicated institution-wide.

5.5 Data Management:

- All stakeholder engagement data shall be maintained in a secured digital repository managed by the CAC.
- Reports, attendance, photographs, MoUs, feedback, and impact assessments shall be archived as per UGC recordkeeping norms and IQAC audit standards.
- Confidentiality and ethical data handling shall be ensured in compliance with institutional research and privacy policies.

5.6 Feedback and Social Audit

- Structured feedback shall be collected from community beneficiaries, faculty, students, and external partners.
- Social audits shall be conducted annually to assess ethical compliance, transparency, and community satisfaction.
- Results shall be reviewed by the Community Engagement Committee, and follow-up actions shall be tracked in the subsequent review cycle.

5.7 Institutional Benchmarking:

- Annual performance reports shall be benchmarked against:
  - UGC and AICTE guidelines;
  - NAAC Criterion 7 and NBA/ABET social outcome indicators;
  - QS Impact, THE Impact, and UI GreenMetric global ranking metrics.
- Benchmarking data shall be integrated into the Institutional Quality Dashboard and reviewed during the IQAC's Annual Planning Meeting.

5.8 Continuous Quality Enhancement

- Findings from the monitoring and evaluation process shall inform curriculum design, research focus and extension planning.
- Continuous improvement strategies shall be implemented to enhance community relevance, impact measurement, and stakeholder satisfaction.
- The IQAC shall document all improvements and recommendations in the Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR).

5.9 Reporting Hierarchy

Level	Responsible Unit	Frequency	Output
Departmental	Faculty Coordinator / HOD	Quarterly	Activity Report
Directorate	CAC / CEA	Quarterly	Consolidated Progress Report
Institutional	IQAC / Registrar / VC	Annual	Community Impact & Sustainability Report
Accreditation & Global	IQAC	Annual / Triennial	Ranking & Accreditation Reports

ARTICLE 6

APPEALS PROCESS

6.1 Reporting of Violations: Any stakeholder, staff, or student may report misconduct, policy violations, data falsification, misuse of funds, unethical practices or breach of community agreements.

Complaints may be submitted:

- In writing or via email to the Vice chancellor or Registrar;
- Through the institutional online grievance redressal portal; or
- Verbally, followed by a written statement within three working days.
- Anonymous or pseudonymous complaints shall not be entertained unless substantiated with verifiable evidence.

6.2 Preliminary Review

- The Registrar, in consultation with the Director (Student Affairs), shall conduct a preliminary review within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint.
- If the issue is administrative or procedural, it may be resolved at the Directorate level.
- Serious or recurring violations shall be escalated to the Community Engagement Grievance Review Committee (CE-GRC) for formal investigation.

6.3 Community Engagement Grievance Review Committee (CE-GRC)

The CE-GRC shall function as an impartial body to investigate reported cases of non-compliance or misconduct.

Composition:

- Chairperson – Registrar
- Member Secretary – Director (Student Affairs)
- Member – Director (QAA)
- Member – Faculty Representative
- Member – Legal / Administrative Officer
- Member – External Social Worker or NGO Expert

Functions:

- Conduct fact-finding, interviews and document review.
- Ensure adherence to due process, fairness and confidentiality.
- Submit findings and recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor within 20 working days.

6.4 Corrective and Disciplinary Measures

Depending on the nature and severity of the violation, one or more of the following actions may be taken:

- Counselling and written warning for minor procedural lapses.
- Withdrawal or suspension of project funding.
- Removal of project or departmental responsibility.
- Revocation of partnership or MoU with external organizations.
- Referral to the Institutional Ethics Committee for ethical misconduct.
- Disciplinary action under institutional service rules or escalation to legal authorities in case of fraud, harassment or data manipulation.

Corrective measures shall be documented and reported to the IQAC during the next review cycle.

6.5 Appeals Process

- Individuals or units dissatisfied with the CE-GRC's findings may file an appeal to the Vice Chancellor within 10 working days of receiving the decision.
- The Vice Chancellor shall review the appeal in consultation with the Registrar and one external expert and issue a final, binding decision within 15 working days.
- The decision shall be communicated in writing to all concerned parties.

6.6 Data Management and Confidentiality

- All complaints, reports and proceedings shall be documented and securely stored by the Registrar's Office in accordance with UGC recordkeeping norms and IQAC audit protocols.
- Access to records shall be restricted to authorized officials involved in the grievance process.
- Data confidentiality shall be maintained to protect the identity of complainants and ensure non-retaliation.

6.7 Protection against Retaliation

- No individual who reports a concern in good faith shall face retaliation, discrimination or adverse consequences.
- Any attempt at retaliation shall be treated as a separate disciplinary violation under institutional code of conduct policies.

6.8 Annual Review and Reporting

- The CAC shall include a summary of reported cases, resolutions and preventive measures in the Annual Community Impact Report submitted to the IQAC.
- Patterns of violations, recurring issues or systemic challenges shall be analysed to improve institutional processes and training programs.

ARTICLE 7

VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy shall be treated with seriousness and resolved in accordance with institutional and statutory frameworks:

- Students:
  Non-compliance with stakeholder engagement guidelines, misconduct during community interactions, or unethical representation of the institution shall invite disciplinary actions such as warnings, suspension from outreach programs or expulsion based on severity.

- Faculty / Staff:
  Breach of ethical or procedural norms, misuse of stakeholder data or negligence in engagement activities shall be referred to the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) for appropriate action.

- External Stakeholders (NGOs, Industries, Contractors, Community Partners):
  Violations including breach of MoUs, misuse of Institutional name or unethical practices shall result in termination of collaboration, blacklisting, and reporting to competent authorities if necessary.

- Repeat or Severe Violations:
  Cases involving repeated misconduct, financial irregularities, or reputational harm shall be reported to statutory bodies such as UGC, AICTE, or the Ministry of Education (MoE) for further action.

- Non-Retaliation Enforcement:
  Any act of retaliation against individuals who report violations in good faith shall itself constitute a serious breach of this policy and attract disciplinary measures.

ARTICLE 8

POLICY REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Review Frequency:
  The policy shall be reviewed every three years or earlier if required due to amendments or directives issued by UGC, AICTE or the Ministry of Education (MoE).

- Review Committee:
  The review process shall be led by the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) in coordination with the Centre for Academic Collaboration (CAC), the Centre for Extension Activities (CEA) and the Registrar's Office.

- Continuous Improvement:
  Policy updates and refinements shall be based on social audit outcomes, community feedback and national and global best practices to ensure ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

- Dissemination:
  The updated policy shall be published on the institutional website, communicated to all departments and highlighted during faculty and student orientation programs to promote awareness and compliance.

References

1. Constitution of India (CoI)
   [https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/16124/1/the_constitution_of_india.pdf]
2. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 – Experiential and Community-Based Learning
3. UGC Guidelines for Fostering Social Responsibility and Community Engagement in Higher Education Institutions in India 2.0 (2022).
4. Ministry of Education (MoE) / Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD)
5. Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MSJE), and Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) – National Welfare Schemes and Community Development Initiatives
6. NAAC Manual – Criterion 7
7. NBA/ABET Accreditation Criteria – Societal & Ethical Outcomes
8. UNESCO ESD 2030 Framework
9. UN SDGs 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 17
10. QS Impact Ranking Indicators
11. THE Impact Ranking Metrics
12. UI GreenMetric Sustainability Criteria

Definitions

- Discrimination: Unfair or unequal treatment of individuals or groups based on protected characteristics.
- Harassment: Any unwelcome verbal, non-verbal, or physical behaviour that demeans, intimidates, or creates a hostile environment.
- Complainant: The individual who submits a complaint under this policy.
- Respondent: The person or entity alleged to have engaged in discrimination, harassment, or related misconduct.
- Retaliation: Any form of adverse action or reprisal taken against a person for reporting, supporting, or participating in a complaint process.
- Inclusion: The active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity to ensure equitable access, participation, and respect for all.
- Equity: Fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all individuals while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented full participation.
- Diversity: The representation and recognition of varied identities, backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences within the institutional community.

- Protected Characteristics: Attributes legally safeguarded against discrimination, including race, caste, religion, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, socioeconomic status, or age.

ANNEXURE I – CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS

The Policy on Identifying and Engaging with Local Stakeholders of Karunya Institute of Technology and Sciences (KITS) draws its legal and ethical foundation from the Constitution of India, which guarantees equality, social justice, environmental protection, and the right to life with dignity.

The following constitutional provisions guide and legitimize this policy framework:

Article 14 – Equality before Law and Equal Protection of Laws

Text Extract:

"The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India."

Relevance to Policy:

- Upholds that all individuals and communities—irrespective of caste, religion, economic status, or gender—must receive equal opportunity and fair treatment in all community engagement initiatives undertaken by KITS.
- Ensures that the Institute's collaborations, outreach programs, and stakeholder interactions are conducted without bias, favouritism or discrimination.
- Reinforces transparency and fairness in the selection of community beneficiaries, partners, and project participants.

Article 15 – Prohibition of Discrimination on Grounds of Religion, Race, Caste, Sex or Place of Birth

Text Extract:

"The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth, or any of them."

Relevance to Policy:

- Guarantees that all community-oriented programs and partnerships of KITS promote inclusivity and social harmony.
- Mandates that women, marginalized, and minority groups receive equitable access to institutional initiatives and capacity-building programs.
- Upholds the principle of non-discrimination in all outreach, recruitment, training, and collaboration processes related to local stakeholder engagement.

Article 21 – Protection of Life and Personal Liberty

Text Extract:

"No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law."

Relevance to Policy:

- Broadly interpreted by the Supreme Court to include the right to live with dignity, health and a clean environment.
- Forms the ethical basis for KITS's initiatives in health awareness, sanitation, clean water and safe environmental practices within surrounding communities.
- Encourages the institution to implement programs ensuring community well-being, environmental safety and livelihood security.

Article 38 – State to Secure a Social Order for the Promotion of Welfare of the People

Text Extract:

"The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of national life."

Relevance to Policy:

- Embodies the directive principle of social and economic justice, guiding KITS's community engagement framework.
- Encourages the Institute to design projects that uplift underprivileged rural and tribal communities, bridging gaps in education, health, and technology access.
- Inspires institutional commitment to nation-building through education, research, and social responsibility, aligning with the goals of NEP 2020 and AICTE's ISR framework.

Article 39 – Certain Principles of Policy to be followed by the State

Text Extract (Clause b & c):

"The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good; and that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment."

Relevance to Policy:

- Justifies technology dissemination and community-based innovation transfer to promote equitable resource utilization.
- Encourages fair sharing of benefits derived from institutional research and rural development projects.
- Reinforces KITS's approach to inclusive development that prioritizes common good over profit-oriented outcomes.

Article 41 – Right to Work, Education and to Public assistance in certain cases

Text Extract:

"The State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education, and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness, and disablement."

Relevance to Policy:

- Motivates KITS to conduct livelihood training, skill enhancement and entrepreneurship programs for local youth and women.
- Supports community literacy and education outreach.
- Strengthens alignment with the Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment initiatives on livelihood empowerment.

Article 243G – Powers, Authority and Responsibilities of Panchayats

Text Extract:

"Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Legislature of a State may, by law, endow the Panchayats with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government."

Relevance to Policy:

- Provides constitutional support for KITS's collaboration with local panchayats and village administrative bodies.
- Facilitates participatory governance and decentralized planning for sustainable rural development.
- Aligns the Institute's outreach activities with MoRD and Unnat Bharat Abhiyan objectives for village empowerment.

Synthesis and Policy Relevance

Together, these constitutional provisions:

- Form the legal foundation for equitable and participatory stakeholder engagement.
- Ensure that all community development initiatives respect the rights, dignity and freedoms of individuals and groups.
- Align institutional actions with the Directive Principles of State Policy and the Fundamental Duties of citizens.
- Legitimize KITS's role as an institution promoting sustainable, inclusive and compassionate development through education, science, and technology.

Summary Table of Constitutional Linkages

Article	Constitutional Essence	Relevance to Stakeholder Policy
14	Equality before Law	Equal access and representation of all communities
15	Prohibition of Discrimination	Inclusive participation of marginalized groups
21	Right to Life	Health, safety, and environmental well-being
38	Promotion of Welfare	Social and economic justice through engagement
39	Equitable Distribution of Resources	Technology dissemination for common good

41	Right to Work and Education	Livelihood, skill, and literacy initiatives
243G	Empowerment of Panchayats	Partnership with local governance for rural transformation

ANNEXURE II – INSTITUTIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Policy Component	Implementing Office	Mechanism	Indicator
Stakeholder Mapping	CAC	Surveys, participatory planning	Stakeholders identified
Community Outreach	CAE/NSS	Health, literacy, livelihood	Beneficiaries impacted
Student Engagement	Student Affairs	Service-learning modules	Participation rate
Green Practices	CAC	Solar, water, waste projects	UI GreenMetric compliance
Monitoring & Reporting	IQAC	Social & environmental audits	Compliance score

ANNEXURE III – NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ALIGNMENT

Focus Area	Framework	Implementation
Community Empowerment	UGC, NEP 2020	Rural immersion, service-learning
Institutional Social Responsibility	AICTE & UBA	Village adoption, Tech dissemination
Inclusive Development	MSJE, MoTA	Tribal, women, and marginalized empowerment
Environmental Sustainability	MoEFCC, UI GreenMetric	Green initiatives and energy projects
Global Performance	QS, THE	SDG-linked benchmarking and evidence

ANNEXURE IV – COMMUNITY IMPACT INDICATORS TABLE

Domain	Indicator Type	Indicator Description	Measurement / Metric	Data Source / Responsible Unit	Aligned SDGs
Health & Well-being	Quantitative	Number of health camps, screenings, or awareness drives conducted	No. of activities / beneficiaries reached per year	CEA / CAC / NSS	SDG 3

	Qualitative	Improvement in health awareness and hygiene practices	Beneficiary feedback / community survey scores	CAC / IQAC	SDG 3
Education & Digital Literacy	Quantitative	Literacy and digital-skills sessions held	No. of sessions / participants / training hours	CEA / Academic Deptartments	SDG 4 & SDG 10
	Qualitative	Change in learner confidence and knowledge application	Post-training assessment / focus-group feedback	CEA / IQAC	SDG 4
Livelihood & Entrepreneurship	Quantitative	Number of skill-development or entrepreneurship programs	No. of trainings / participants / start-ups initiated	CEA / CAC / Skill Cell	SDG 8 & SDG 10
	Qualitative	Improvement in employment or income levels of beneficiaries	Follow-up survey / impact story documentation	CAC / IQAC	SDG 8
Environmental Sustainability	Quantitative	Plantation drives, waste management and energy projects	No. of trees planted, waste recycled, energy savings	CAC / Green Committee	SDG 7 & SDG 13
	Qualitative	Awareness and behaviour change towards eco-friendly practices	Pre- and post-campaign survey scores	CAC / IQAC	SDG 13
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	Quantitative	Construction / repair of sanitation units and clean water projects	No. of units / villages covered	CAC / Civil Dept / UBA Team	SDG 6
	Qualitative	User satisfaction and hygiene improvement	Feedback forms / field visits	CAC / IQAC	SDG 6
Women & Youth Empowerment	Quantitative	Number of leadership and capacity-building programs	No. of programs / participants (M/F)	CAC / CEA / NSS	SDG 5 & SDG 10
	Qualitative	Increase in participation and decision-making roles	Case studies / beneficiary feedback	CAC / IQAC	SDG 5

Technology Dissemination & Innovation	Quantitative	Community-based research projects or technology transfers	No. of projects / technologies implemented	R&D Centre / CAC	SDG 9 & SDG 11
	Qualitative	Local acceptance and impact of technology solutions	Stakeholder review / impact stories	CAC / IQAC	SDG 9
Institutional Visibility & Collaboration	Quantitative	MoUs and partnerships with panchayats/NGOs/industries	No. of active MoUs and projects	CAC / Registrar	SDG 17
	Qualitative	Strength of collaboration and mutual benefits realized	Partner feedback / annual review report	IQAC / CAC	SDG 17

ANNEXURE V - ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Abbreviations
CAC	Community–Academia Collaboration
CEA	Centre for Extension Activities
IQAC	Internal Quality Assurance Cell
NSS	National Service Scheme
AICTE	All India Council for Technical Education
UGC	University Grants Commission
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoRD	Ministry of Rural Development
MSJE	Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
MoTA	Ministry of Tribal Affairs
MoEFCC	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
NAAC	National Assessment and Accreditation Council
NBA	National Board of Accreditation
QS	Quacquarelli Symonds Impact Rankings
THE	Times Higher Education Impact Rankings
UI	UI GreenMetric World University Ranking
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal