

A BILL

FOR

AN ACT TO PROMOTE INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NIGERIA BY PROVIDING A FRAMEWORK FOR SUPPORTING STARTUPS, FOSTERING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, AND ESTABLISHING FINANCIAL INCENTIVES TO ENCOURAGE BUSINESS GROWTH; AND FOR RELATED MATTERS

Sponsored by Hon. Esosa Iyawe

[] Commencement

ENACTED by the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria-

1 1.-(1) There is established a body to be known as the National
2 Innovation and Entrepreneurship Commission (in this Bill referred to as
3 "the Commission").

Establishment
of the National
Innovation and
Entrepreneurship
Commission

4 (2) The Commission shall be a corporate body with perpetual
5 succession and a common seal and may sue and be sued in its corporate
6 name.

7 2.-(1) There is established for the Commission, a Governing Board
8 (in this Bill referred to as "the Board").

Composition of
the Governing
Board of the
Commission

9 (2) The Board shall consist of-

10 (a) a chairman to be appointed by the President, Commander-in-
11 Chief of the Armed Forces, of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the
12 recommendation of the Minister of Innovation, Science, and Technology;

13 (b) the Director-General of the Commission;

14 (c) a representative each from the-

15 (i) Federal Ministry of Innovation, Science, and Technology,

16 (ii) Federal Ministry of Finance,

17 (iii) Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of
18 Nigeria, and

19 (d) three representatives from the private sector with expertise in-

	1	(i) Innovation,
	2	(ii) Startup, and
	3	(iii) Entrepreneurship.
	4	(3) The supplementary provisions contained in the schedule to this
	5	Bill shall have effect concerning the proceedings of the Council and other
	6	matters.
Powers of the Board	7	3. The Board shall have the power to-
	8	(a) determine the general policy of the Commission;
	9	(b) provide for the discipline and general welfare of staff of the
	10	Commission;
	11	(c) constitute relevant committees to assist in executing specific
	12	assignments for the Commission;
	13	(d) approve the projects and programmes of the Commission.
Tenure and cessation of office for members of the Board	14	4.-(1) The Chairman and members of the Governing Board shall hold
	15	office for four years and may be eligible for re-appointment for another term of
	16	four years and no more, on such terms and conditions as specified by their letter
	17	of appointment.
	18	(2) The office of the Chairman or any other member of the governing
	19	Board shall become vacant if-
	20	(a) the person resigns his appointment by notice in writing under his
	21	hand addressed to the Minister;
	22	(b) the Minister in consultation with other members of the Board is
	23	satisfied that it is not in the best interest of the Commission for the person to
	24	continue in office and notifies the member to that effect;
	25	(c) the person is incapable of performing the functions of the office
	26	because of disease of body or mind and was declared so by a medical
	27	practitioner; or
	28	(d) because of death, bankruptcy or conviction of a criminal
	29	offence.

- 1 **5.** The Chairman and members of the Board shall be paid such
2 emoluments, allowances and benefits in accordance with the existing
3 regulations on such payment. Allowances,
emoluments, etc.
of members of
the Board
- 4 **6.** The Commission shall- Functions of the
Commission
- 5 (a) formulate and implement policies for the promotion of
6 innovation and entrepreneurship in Nigeria;
- 7 (b) facilitate the establishment and development of innovation
8 hubs across the country;
- 9 (c) provide funding and financial support mechanisms for startups
10 and small businesses;
- 11 (d) provide capacity-building programs and mentorship for
12 entrepreneurs and innovators; and
- 13 (e) collaborate with government agencies, private sector
14 stakeholders, and international organizations to advance innovation and
15 entrepreneurship.
- 16 **7.-(1)** The Commission shall, subject to the approval of the Board, Departments of
the Commission
17 establish such departments as the Commission may deem necessary.
- 18 (2) Each Department shall be headed by a Director who shall be
19 professionally qualified to hold the office.
- 20 **8.-(1)** There shall be appointed for the Commission, a Director- Appointment of
Director-General
and Secretary of
the Agency
21 General who shall possess appropriate qualifications and cognate working
22 experience as the Board may determine.
- 23 (2) The Director-General shall-
- 24 (a) be the Chief-Executive officer of the Commission and shall be
25 charged with the general responsibility of matters relating to the day-to-day
26 management and operations of the Commission;
- 27 (b) be appointed by the President, Commander-in-Chief of the
28 Armed Forces, of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, on the recommendation
29 of the Minister;
- 30 (c) hold office for four years and may be re-appointed for a further

1 term of four years and no more; and

2 (d) be answerable to the Board.

3 (3) The Board shall appoint for the Commission, a Secretary who
4 shall qualify as a legal practitioner and is so qualified for not less than 10 years.

5 (4) The Secretary shall be answerable to the Director-General of the
6 Commission.

Staff of the
Commission

7 **9.**-(1) The Commission shall, from time to time, appoint such other
8 persons as members of staff of the Commission as it may deem necessary, to
9 assist the Commission in the performance of its functions under this Bill.

10 (2) The appointment of such staffs as provided in sub-clause (1) of
11 this clause shall be according to the procedure stipulated by the Board.

Pensions Act,
Cap P4, LFN,
2004

12 **10.**-(1) The service in the Commission shall be approved service for
13 the Pension Reform Act and, accordingly, officers and other persons employed
14 in the Commission shall be entitled to pensions, and other retirement benefits
15 as are prescribed in the Act.

16 (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of sub-clause (1) of this clause,
17 the Commission may appoint a person to any office on terms, which preclude
18 the grant of a pension or other retirement benefits in respect of that office.

Funds for the
Commission

19 **11.**-(1) The Commission shall establish and maintain a fund which
20 shall be applied towards the promotion of the objectives of this Bill.

21 (2) There shall be established and maintained by the Commission, a
22 Fund into which shall be paid and credited-

23 (a) all allocations from the Federal Government;

24 (b) all grants, gifts and donations received from both local and
25 international organizations for the purpose of the functions of the Commission;

26 (c) fees, penalties, charges, administrative costs of proceedings, and
27 other moneys payable to the Commission in pursuance of this Bill;

28 (d) all monies received by the Commission as gifts, endowments,
29 loans, contributions, or donations; and

1 (e) all other monies and assets which may accrue to the Fund from
2 time to time.

3 **12.** The Commission shall, from time to time, apply the funds at its Expenditure of
4 disposal to- the Agency

5 (a) the cost of establishing and maintaining the Commission;

6 (b) the cost of compliance monitoring and enforcement activities;

7 (c) pay allowances and other benefits of members of the Board and
8 of its Committees;

9 (d) pay the salaries and entitlements of the Director-General and
10 other members of staff of the Commission;

11 (e) pay the personnel, allowances, pensions, gratuities, benefits
12 and other administrative costs of the Commission;

13 (f) pay for attendance at local and international conferences related
14 to its functions;

15 (g) build capacity of members of staff of the Commission;

16 (h) publicize and promote the activities of the Commission;

17 (i) develop and maintain any property vested in or owned by the
18 Commission;

19 (j) pay for services and contracts entered into by the Commission;
20 and

21 (k) undertake any other activity in connection with all or any of the
22 functions of the Commission.

23 **13.** The Commission may, with the written approval of the Board Power to borrow
24 and subject to the guidelines and policy of the Federal Government, borrow money
25 such money needed for the exercise of its function, provided that such
26 borrowing shall be made on the terms and conditions that do not
27 compromise the competence of the Commission.

28 **14.-(1)** The Board shall keep proper accounts of the Commission Accounts and
29 and proper records in relation to those accounts. Audits

30 (2) The accounts of the Commission shall be audited, not later than

	1	six months, after the end of the year to which it relates, by auditors appointed by
	2	the Commission from the list and in accordance with the guidelines supplied by
	3	the Auditor-General of the Federation.
Establishment of Innovation Hubs	4	15. -(1) The Commission shall establish and support innovation hubs
	5	across Nigeria to foster research, technological development, and business
	6	incubation.
	7	(2) The Commission shall encourage partnerships between public and
	8	private sector entities in the management and operation of innovation hubs.
Financial Support for Startups	9	16. -(1) The Commission shall establish a Startup Support Fund to
	10	provide financial assistance to eligible startups.
	11	(2) The Fund shall be used to-
	12	(a) provide grants and seed funding to early-stage startups;
	13	(b) offer low-interest loans and credit facilities to small businesses;
	14	and
	15	(c) support research, product development, and commercialization
	16	efforts.
	17	(3) The Commission may partner with financial institutions and
	18	private investors to expand the funding opportunities available to startups.
Tax Incentives for Startups and Investors	19	17. -(1) A startup registered under this Bill shall be entitled to-
	20	(a) a tax holiday for its first three years of operation;
	21	(b) reduced corporate income tax rates for up to five years, as
	22	prescribed by regulations under this Bill; and
	23	(c) exemptions from certain regulatory fees for a specified period.
	24	(2) Investors in eligible startups shall be entitled to tax credits for
	25	investments made in Nigerian startups, subject to the conditions prescribed by
	26	the Federal Inland Revenue Service.
Registration for Startups	27	18. -(1) A startup seeking to benefit from the provisions of this Bill
	28	shall register with the Commission.
	29	(2) The Commission shall maintain a National Startup Register
	30	containing details of all registered startups and their areas of operation.

1	19. -(1)The Commission shall monitor compliance with the	Compliance and Monitoring
2	provisions of this Bill and ensure that startups and beneficiaries of financial	
3	support adhere to the terms and conditions set by the Commission.	
4	20. Any person who-	Offences and Penalties
5	(a) fraudulently obtains financial support under this Bill;	
6	(b) misuses funds allocated for innovation and entrepreneurship	
7	purposes; or	
8	(c) obstructs the functions of the Commission, shall be guilty of an	
9	offence and liable on conviction to a fine of not less than N5,000,000.00 or	
10	imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years; or both.	
11	21. The Minister, make regulations for the implementation of the	Regulations
12	provisions of this Bill.	
13	22. In this Bill-	Interpretation
14	"Innovation hub" means a facility established to support research,	
15	development, and commercialization of innovative ideas and technologies;	
16	"Minister" means the Minister responsible for innovation, science, and	
17	technology; and	
18	"Startup" means a newly established business entity engaged in the	
19	development of innovative products, services, or business models;	
20	23. This Bill may be cited as the Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Citation
21	Support Bill, 2025.	

1 SCHEDULE

2 *Clause 2(3)*

3 SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE COMMISSION

4 *Proceedings of the Board*5 1.-(1) Subject to the provisions of this Bill and other applicable laws
6 the Board may make standing orders regulating its proceedings.7 (2) The Board shall meet whenever it is summoned by the Chairman,
8 or if required to do so by at least 6 members of the Board and shall meet for a
9 minimum of 4 times in a year.10 (3) The Chairman shall preside over the meetings of the Board and in
11 his absence; members of the Board shall appoint one person among themselves
12 to act for that meeting as the Chairman.13 (4) The quorum of the Board shall be formed by the Chairman or a
14 person sitting in his place and five other members of the Board including the
15 Secretary.16 *Committees*17 2.-(1) The Board may establish one or more committees to carry out,
18 on behalf of the Board, such functions as the Board may determine.19 (2) A committee established under this paragraph shall consist of such
20 number of persons as may be determined by the Board and a person shall hold
21 office on the committee in accordance with the terms of his appointment.22 (3) A decision of a committee of the Board shall be of no effect until it
23 is ratified by the Board.24 *Miscellaneous*25 3.-(1) The Secretary of the Board shall be the custodian of the seal of
26 the Commission.27 (2) Fixing of the common seal of the Commission shall be
28 authenticated by the signature of the Chairman of the Board or some other
29 persons authorized to do so.

30 (3) Any contract or instrument, which if made or executed by a person

1 not being a body corporate, shall not be required to be made under seal, shall
2 be executed on behalf of the Commission by the Director-General or any
3 other person authorized to do so.

4 (4) Where the Board desires to obtain an expert opinion from a
5 person not being a member of the Board, the Board may co-opt such person
6 for such period the Board may determine but the co-opted person shall not
7 have the right to vote or to count in forming a quorum.

8 (5) The validity of any proceeding of the Board or a committee
9 shall not be adversely affected by any vacancy in the membership of the
10 Board or Committee or by any defect in the appointment of a member of the
11 Board or Committee or by reason that a person not entitled to take part in the
12 proceedings of the Board or the Committee took part.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

This Bill seeks to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in Nigeria by providing a framework for supporting startups, fostering research and development, and establishing financial incentives to encourage business growth.