

OPENING A NEW PHASE IN FUTA – AMSEN/ RISE PARTNERSHIP



1.0 BRIEF ON THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, AKURE (FUTA), NIGERIA

Warm greetings from the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), Nigeria. The University was formally established in 1982. Its primary mandate is to champion the technological advancement of the nation through advanced training and research in technological discipline. To a very large extent, FUTA has fulfilled this mandate. It has provided a sound platform for the re-tooling of undergraduates and graduate students. It has equally engaged in capacity building in specialized programmes in the field of Agriculture, Engineering, Environmental Studies and Geosciences.

FUTA's **vision** is *“to be one of the best Universities of Technology in the world, committed to carving out an enviable niche for itself as a centre of excellence, epitomized by high quality programmes, products and contributions to the society”*. Its **mission** is *“to ceaselessly promote technological advancement through motivated and skilled staff dedicated to teaching and research, geared towards global needs and production of self-reliant high level manpower, goods and services”*.

During the just concluded 2009/2010 session, the University had 10,972 undergraduate students made up of 8,319 male and 2,653 female; and over 2,000 postgraduate students. The University has 630 academic and 1,346 administrative, professional and other support staff. It has six (6) Schools (Faculties) running regular undergraduate courses and a Postgraduate School viz:

- ❖ School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology (SAAT)
- ❖ School of Engineering and Engineering Technology (SEET)
- ❖ School of Environmental Technology (SET)
- ❖ School of Mines and Earth Sciences (SMES)
- ❖ School of Sciences (SOS); and
- ❖ School of Management Technology (SMAT)
- ❖ School of Postgraduate Studies

The University has the following academic support Centres and Units:

- ❖ Centre for Continuing Education (CCE)
- ❖ Computer Resource Centre (CRC)
- ❖ Centre for Research & Development (CERAD)
- ❖ Teaching and Research Farm (TRF)
- ❖ Directorate of Industrial Training
- ❖ Centre for Entrepreneurial Development & Gender Issues in Science and Technology (CEGIST)
- ❖ Centre for Space Research & Applications (CESRA)
- ❖ Centre for Biotechnology (Still in Process)
- ❖ Centre for Renewable & Non-Renewable Energy (Still in Process)

FUTA recently won a World Bank grant of Seven Million US Dollars to establish a Centre of Excellence in Food Security in Nigeria.

The University Library has over 65,000 volumes of books and 523 audio-visual materials. It is fully automated with SLAM software and Internet enabled.

FUTA is ranked the Best University of Technology in Nigeria by the Government supervisory agency- the National Universities Commission (NUC). It is rated the University with the best Schools (Faculties) in Engineering and Environmental Science; and its School (Faculty) of Agriculture is rated Third nationwide by the same agency. The University is rated among the top 100 Best Universities in Africa in the 2010 Webometric Ranking of Universities.

FUTA has produced several distinguished academic staff as Research Fellows of the Alexander Von Humbolt (AvH) Foundation; IFS; and other world-class Foundations. Based on empirical data gathered from a team of researchers, the employers' rating of FUTA graduates in the world of work is very outstanding.

The University has a very strong and cordial relationship with its host communities; and very active academic linkage collaborations with over 40 reputable local and international institutions.

2.0 BACKGROUND ON FUTA – AMSEN/RISE RELATIONSHIP

The African Materials Sciences and Engineering Network (AMSEN) under the auspices of Regional Initiative in Science and Education (RISE) became known to the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), Nigeria in 2008. The unfolding developments are as follows:

- ❖ FUTA was nominated by one of its young Faculty staff, Dr. P. A. Olubambi whilst a graduate student at University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It is noted that other institutions in the network are: University of Nairobi, Kenya; University of Namibia, Windhoek; University of Botswana, Gaborone; and University of Wits, Johannesburg
- ❖ Formal endorsement of the RISE contract by FUTA was made by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Adebisi M. Balogun and Prof. J. O. Borode in February 2009
- ❖ FUTA AMSEN Node is currently domiciliated in the University's Department of Metallurgical and Materials Engineering
- ❖ Formal launch of FUTA AMSEN Node took place on 21st December, 2009. During the period, FUTA played host to the Academic Director and Academic Secretary of AMSEN - Professors Leslie Cornish and Frank Kavishe respectively
- ❖ As at now, four Ph.D students are enrolled for funding by RISE through AMSEN. The enrolled students are Faculty staff members of the

Department of Metallurgical and Materials Engineering namely: Messrs I. O. Oladele; O. Olaniran; F. A. Aramide; and D. O. Folorunso

- ❖ Similarly, two other members of staff of FUTA i.e. Mrs. Adenike Olaseinde of Metallurgical and Materials Engineering Department; and Mr. Isaac Popoola of Physics Department are benefiting from RISE project through another AMSEN Node
- ❖ In a similar vein, Mr. Ayodeji Apata, a FUTA graduate is a beneficiary of RISE project
- ❖ Funding from RISE through AMSEN has brought great benefits such that it has:
 - greatly assisted FUTA graduate students in their research studies;
 - enabled the FUTA AMSEN to procure equipment of dire need to the University; and
 - provided avenue for both staff and students to attend workshops and conferences. Notable ones are: the 1st AMSEN Workshop held in January 2010 in Windhoek, Namibia; and the training Workshop held at University of Botswana, Gaborone in April 2010.

3.0 APPRECIATION AND FURTHER EXPECTATIONS

FUTA is grateful to AMSEN and RISE for the networking arrangement towards staff development and retention. FUTA is looking forward to a stronger relationship with AMSEN and RISE. The University will actively support and participate in all the programmes and activities of both bodies. Equipment and facilities procured or donated to FUTA will be appropriately used and maintained.

Once again, the University remains grateful to AMSEN and RISE; and wishes them greater successes in the times ahead.