

Why universities should embrace research, innovation

Innovations emerging from universities are transformed into solutions, that empower the youth and strengthen the economy, bridge the gap between research and real world impact, writes **Jane Nafula**.

As of 2026, Uganda has over 50 recognized universities, comprising 10 public and more than 40 private institutions. These universities are mandated to teach, while also conducting research, innovation and providing community service or outreach.

Prof Eli Katunguka, the Vice Chancellor at Kyambogo University insists that a university that does not embrace research and innovation is no better than a High School.

Beyond producing new knowledge, research offers solutions to real life problems, elevates institutional prestige and rankings and aids evidence-based policy and decision making according to him and that research that is not applied or shared has limited value.

"It provides a platform for our researchers to showcase their findings, share lessons and engage with stakeholders who can translate these innovations into real world applications," he explains.

How Kyambogo started the journey to a research-led University.

Prof Katunguka acknowledges that research and innovation are expensive ventures but with partnerships collaborations and commitment from the management of the university, they can get started.

"When I joined this university in 2014, I promised to strengthen and promote the research ecosystem in Kyambogo. That was my commitment. This was based on my background at Makerere University, where I worked as the Director of Graduate Research and Training for ten years," he says. "I committed to share my experience with the people in Kyambogo."

In order to realise his dream, the University Council established a competitive research scheme in 2014. This scheme had many aspects, one of which was to provide research funding to researchers.

"It was little money Shs 30 million for humanities and Shs 40 million for scientists. The purpose of this was to give them an appetite for bigger money.

"We built their capacity in grant writing, scholarly writing data analysis and accounting for the funds. We reached more than 400 members of staff," he explains. "The competitive research scheme has gone through 10 calls and so far,



Innovators from Uganda Christian University display some of their innovations during the 16th university exhibition held at Gulu University recently. PHOTO/JANE NAFULA

more than 175 staff members have benefited from this scheme that is a big achievement."

In addition, senior staff were trained on how to supervise graduate students. According to him, supervision of graduate students remain a big problem in all our universities.

"Students spend a long time on graduate programmes. What are you doing in all this time?" he asked. "People tend to supervise the way they were supervised. If they were harassed they are going to harass [their students]. That is why we hear some of the supervisors telling students to find them at the car washing bay on a Saturday morning."

Prof Katunguka adds that he has invested in staff development, with many of them have since upgraded their skills and obtained Masters' degrees and PhDs. Today, Kyambogo University has set up many graduate programmes, and is now looking to improve the way research is carried out there.

He explains that research in most universities is done through graduate students' work with supervisors publishing with them.

"I was working with my supervisor, who has worked with about 69 PhD students and producing 450 publications. This is how we can promote research in a University

like ours," he said. "When people started applying for research grants we realised that the number of people

applying and qualifying for research, was reducing because many of us were getting old and were retiring.

We came up with a scheme called the graduate fellowship scheme, where we would pick the best students to nurture them into professors."

He explains that the scheme has seen them mentor 60 students the first cohort.

"Most of them have completed their masters and have been recruited into the university and are on their way to completing their PhDs," he explained. "The council appointed some of them as lecturers in the recent promotions. The second cohort has about 56 students who are now doing their Masters."

This second cohort has students who registered for their PhDs after completing their Masters degrees. Through this, he is pleased at the calibre of young energetic people, who were initiated into a research culture, and is hoping this continues after he retires.

Prof Katunguka also noted that the university has been able to build partnerships, noting that a university cannot exist without partnerships. He explains that when the university initiated the competitive research scheme, the University Council allocated them Shs 1 billion.

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Office of the School Registrar

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 19TH MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR THE POST GRADUATE DIPLOMAS, DIPLOMAS AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMMES TO BE HELD ON MAY 22, 2026

Makerere University Business School will be hosting its 19th Graduation Ceremony at the MUBS Main Campus in Nakawa on Friday, May 22, 2026. At this ceremony, all students who have fulfilled the requirements for the awards on the underlisted programmes for the academic year 2024/2025 will be awarded:

Postgraduate Diploma programmes	Ordinary Diploma programmes
1. Postgraduate Diploma in Business Education	1. Diploma in Business Administration
2. Postgraduate Diploma in Business Intelligence and Data Analytics	2. Diploma in Accounting and Finance
	3. Diploma in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management
	4. Diploma in Procurement and Logistic Management
	5. Diploma in Computer Science
	6. Diploma in Catering and Hotel Operations
1. Higher Education Certificate in Business Studies	7. Diploma in Procurement and Supply Chain Management
2. National Certificate in Business Administration (awarded by UVTAB)	8. Diploma in Local Government Administration
	9. Diploma in Business Computing
	10. Diploma in Human Resource Management

Each graduand is informed that it will be a requirement to make the following payments:

1. A payment of the following graduation fees plus a bank charge to any of the banks used by the Uganda Revenue Authority. The same receipt of payment will be presented when applying for the Academic Transcript and Certificate.

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	Ugandans	International
a) Convocation and Alumni fees	UGX 20,000	US\$ 20
b) Graduation and one booklet	UGX 50,000	US\$ 62
c) Certificate	UGX 20,000	US\$ 50
d) Transcript	UGX 30,000	US\$ 50
Total	UGX 120,000	US\$182

2. A payment of the customized graduation gown fees UGX 80,000

ACCOUNT DETAILS

STANBIC BANK ACCOUNT NO: 903006349543 ACCOUNT NAME: THE DEAN OF STUDENTS
For any further information, contact the School Registrar's Office on registrar@mubs.ac.ug or on 0414338140/120/+256775622921, +256774852348

Eldred M. Kyomuhangi-Manyindo, PhD
SCHOOL REGISTRAR

INNOVATIONS

Beyond producing new knowledge, research offers solutions to real life problems, elevates institutional prestige and rankings and aids evidence-based policy and decision.