



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9846



**Introduced by Representatives Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez,
Yedda Marie K. Romualdez, Andrew Julian K. Romualdez and Jude A.
Acidre**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A COMPREHENSIVE, COHERENT, AND
SUSTAINABLE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH
FRAMEWORK FOR PHILIPPINE HIGHER EDUCATION, PROVIDING
FOR FACULTY SCHOLARSHIPS AND RESEARCH GRANTS,
CREATING FOR THE PURPOSE A FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND
RESEARCH FUND, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Higher education is a cornerstone of national development, playing a central role in building human capital, advancing innovation, promoting social mobility, and enhancing global competitiveness. At the heart of a strong higher education system are its faculty members—teachers, researchers, mentors, and academic leaders whose qualifications, competencies, and scholarly productivity directly influence instructional quality, student achievement, and the creation and application of knowledge.

Despite sustained efforts to reform the higher education sector, faculty development and research in the Philippines continue to face persistent and structural challenges. Existing scholarship, research, and capacity-building initiatives have often been fragmented, short-term, and dependent on changing

administrative priorities. The absence of a unified, statutory, and long-term framework has contributed to uneven faculty qualifications across regions and institution types, underdeveloped institutional research systems, limited graduate supervision capacity, and weak alignment between higher education outputs and national development objectives.

Significant disparities remain between well-resourced institutions and those located in geographically isolated, disadvantaged, or emerging areas. Many higher education institutions (HEIs) experience difficulty in meeting faculty qualification standards, sustaining graduate programs, or developing a critical mass of research-active faculty. These constraints adversely affect teaching quality, restrict innovation, weaken graduate education, and diminish the contribution of higher education to economic growth, social progress, and evidence-based policymaking.

This proposed measure, entitled the “Philippine Higher Education Faculty Development and Research Act,” seeks to address these challenges by establishing a comprehensive, coherent, and sustainable national framework for faculty development and research. It explicitly affirms faculty development and research as core, integral, and continuing functions of higher education, alongside instruction and extension.

The bill mandates the formulation of a National Faculty Development and Research Framework to be led by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), providing a unified policy direction for faculty development, research capacity strengthening, and graduate education enhancement. The framework adopts a developmental, differentiated, and equity-sensitive approach that respects institutional autonomy while recognizing variations in institutional mandates, typologies, stages of development, and regional contexts.

The measure institutionalizes a broad range of faculty development and research interventions, including graduate and post-graduate studies, teaching and learning innovations, research capability-building, academic leadership development, industry and community immersion, and mentoring and peer-learning systems. It likewise strengthens the higher education research ecosystem through competitive research initiatives, support for early-career researchers, strengthened research ethics and governance, enhanced graduate research supervision, and mechanisms for research dissemination and utilization.

The bill further reinforces governance and accountability by establishing a permanent Faculty Development and Research Service within CHED, institutionalizing systematic monitoring and evaluation, requiring regular

reporting to Congress, and creating a National Higher Education Research Repository to promote transparency, accessibility, and knowledge sharing.

Ultimately, this measure provides a long-overdue statutory foundation to professionalize, sustain, and equalize faculty development and research across Philippine higher education, ensuring that improvements in teaching quality, research capacity, and academic leadership translate into meaningful and lasting contributions to national development.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly requested.



FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ



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JUDE A. ACIDRE



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*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines
in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. *Title* — This Act shall be known as the “Philippine Higher Education Faculty Development and Research Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy* — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to strengthen Philippine higher education as a strategic driver of inclusive growth, social mobility, innovation, and national competitiveness by institutionalizing a comprehensive, coherent, adequately funded, and outcomes-oriented framework for faculty development and research.

The State recognizes that faculty members constitute the intellectual backbone of the higher education system. They are the primary agents through whom teaching quality is assured, student learning outcomes are realized, graduate education is sustained, research and innovation are advanced, and knowledge is translated into policy, industry, and community impact. The quality, relevance, and credibility of higher education institutions are inextricably linked to the qualifications, competencies, research capacity, and ethical standards of their faculty.

The State further recognizes that structural and systemic challenges—such as uneven faculty qualifications across regions, limited access to graduate education and research funding, fragmented and short-term faculty development programs, weak institutional research systems, and the absence of a permanent statutory framework—have constrained the ability of Philippine higher education to respond effectively to evolving national development priorities, workforce transformation, technological disruption, and global academic competition.

Accordingly, the State shall adopt a developmental, differentiated, and equity-sensitive approach to faculty development and research that:

- (a) Strengthens institutional capacity across all regions and institution types;
- (b) Promotes excellence, accountability, and continuous improvement;
- (c) Supports emerging and resource-constrained institutions without undermining standards; and
- (d) Ensures alignment with national education reform priorities, science and technology strategies, innovation agendas, and the National Research and Development Agenda.

SEC. 3. *Objectives* — This Act shall pursue the following objectives:

- (a) To establish a unified, statutory, and long-term national framework for faculty development and research that transcends fragmented programs and shifting administrative priorities;
- (b) To systematically improve faculty qualifications, teaching effectiveness, research competencies, innovation capacity, and academic leadership across disciplines, sectors, and institution types;
- (c) To strengthen the research ecosystem of higher education institutions by enhancing research governance, ethics, supervision, infrastructure, publication, utilization, and innovation pathways;
- (d) To institutionalize sustainable, transparent, performance-based, and equity-sensitive funding mechanisms that support both excellence and developmental catch-up;
- (e) To professionalize and strengthen the institutional capacity of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to govern, coordinate, monitor, and evaluate faculty development and research initiatives using evidence-based and outcomes-oriented approaches; and
- (f) To ensure that faculty development and research investments translate into measurable contributions to national development, workforce readiness, public policy, technological advancement, and balanced regional growth.

SEC. 4. *Scope and Coverage* — This Act shall apply to all public and private higher education institutions (HEIs), including state universities and colleges (SUCs), local universities and colleges (LUCs), and private HEIs duly recognized by the Commission on Higher Education.

Faculty members engaged in instruction, research, extension, innovation, academic governance, or institutional service functions, whether full-time or part-time, permanent or contractual, shall be eligible for programs and support under this Act, subject to implementing rules and regulations issued by CHED.

SEC. 5. Definition of Terms — For purposes of this Act:

- (a) **Baseline Institutional Support** refers to the minimum level of funding access and program participation guaranteed to higher education institutions to ensure equitable inclusion in faculty development and research initiatives, regardless of performance classification or development stage;
- (b) **Equity-Sensitive Funding** refers to funding approaches that account for institutional context, development stage, geographic location, and resource constraints, and are designed to promote inclusive growth and balanced regional development within the higher education system;
- (c) **Faculty Development** refers to organized, sustained, and strategically planned interventions designed to enhance faculty competencies, professional standards, and functional effectiveness in teaching and learning, research and creative work, innovation, extension, academic leadership, and institutional service, consistent with institutional mandates and national higher education priorities;
- (d) **Faculty Development and Research Fund (FDRF)** refers to the dedicated, earmarked, and purpose-specific fund created under this Act to finance faculty development programs, research activities, institutional capacity-building initiatives, and related support mechanisms;
- (e) **Faculty Development and Research Service (FDRS)** refers to the permanent, specialized service established within the Commission on

Higher Education responsible for policy formulation, program administration, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of faculty development and research initiatives under this Act;

- (f) ***Graduate Education*** refers to advanced academic programs beyond the baccalaureate level, including master's, doctoral, post-doctoral, and equivalent professional programs, which emphasize advanced coursework, research, supervision, and scholarly output;
- (g) ***Graduate Research Supervision Capacity*** refers to the institutional and faculty capability to mentor, advise, supervise, and evaluate graduate-level research, including theses, dissertations, and capstone projects, in accordance with quality assurance and ethical standards;
- (h) ***Higher Education Institution (HEI)*** refers to any public or private institution duly recognized or authorized by the Commission on Higher Education to offer post-secondary degree programs, including state universities and colleges, local universities and colleges, and private higher education institutions;
- (i) ***Institutional Research Agenda*** refers to a formally adopted set of priority research areas and thematic directions of a higher education institution, aligned with its mandate, regional development needs, and the National Research and Development Agenda;
- (j) ***Institutional Typology*** refers to the classification of higher education institutions based on mandate, function, development stage, and performance characteristics, including distinctions among teaching-focused, research-oriented, and hybrid institutions, as determined by the Commission on Higher Education;
- (k) ***National Research and Development Agenda*** refers to the officially adopted national framework of priorities, strategic directions, and thematic

thrusts for research, development, innovation, and knowledge production as determined by the appropriate government authorities;

- (l) ***Performance-Based Funding*** refers to resource allocation mechanisms guided by defined quantitative and qualitative indicators of outputs, outcomes, institutional capacity, continuous improvement, and societal impact, applied in a developmental, differentiated, and non-punitive manner;
- (m) ***Performance Indicators*** refers to quantitative and qualitative measures used to assess outputs, outcomes, improvement trajectories, and impact of faculty development and research initiatives at the faculty, institutional, and system levels;
- (n) ***Research*** refers to systematic, ethical, and scholarly inquiry, whether basic, applied, translational, policy-oriented, interdisciplinary, or creative in nature, undertaken to generate new knowledge, technologies, evidence-based policy insights, or artistic and intellectual outputs that contribute to academic advancement and societal development;
- (o) ***Research and Creative Work (RCW)*** refers to scholarly inquiry, scientific investigation, policy research, technological development, and creative production recognized by the Commission on Higher Education as legitimate research outputs within the higher education sector;
- (p) ***Research Utilization*** refers to the systematic process of translating research findings into policy, practice, innovation, commercialization, community application, or further knowledge generation, including dissemination, technology transfer, and policy engagement;
- (q) ***Return Service*** refers to the obligation of recipients of scholarships or research grants under this Act to render service through teaching, research, graduate supervision, institutional capacity-building, or public service, under terms determined by the Commission on Higher Education; and

- (r) ***Strategic Priority Areas*** refers to disciplines, research themes, or fields of inquiry identified by the government as critical to national development, innovation, public welfare, or global competitiveness.

SEC. 6. *Faculty Development and Research as Core Higher Education Functions* — Faculty development and research are hereby declared core, inseparable, and continuing functions of higher education institutions, alongside instruction and extension, and shall be recognized as essential institutional responsibilities fundamental to the delivery of quality, relevant, and responsive higher education.

As such, higher education institutions shall systematically plan, support, and sustain faculty development and research activities as integral components of their academic mission, organizational structure, and resource allocation, and shall not treat such functions as incidental, optional, or ancillary to instruction.

The Commission on Higher Education shall ensure that faculty development and research are fully integrated and institutionalized within higher education policies and practices, including, but not limited to, institutional development and strategic plans, outcomes-based education frameworks, graduate program design and strengthening, accreditation and quality assurance systems, faculty workload and career progression frameworks, and institutional performance evaluation and accountability mechanisms.

CHED shall further adopt policies, standards, and monitoring mechanisms to ensure that the effective performance of faculty development and research functions contributes to continuous improvement in teaching quality, research

productivity, graduate education outcomes, and institutional and system-level performance.

SEC. 7. *Faculty Development and Research Framework* — The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall formulate, adopt, and periodically review and update a National Faculty Development and Research Framework, which shall serve as the primary and overarching policy instrument governing the design, implementation, coordination, and evaluation of all faculty development and research initiatives under this Act.

The Framework shall articulate a coherent national direction for faculty development and research, ensure alignment with national development priorities, and provide a common reference for higher education institutions in planning, implementing, and assessing faculty development and research programs, consistent with the principles of institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

In the formulation, review, and updating of the Framework, CHED shall undertake meaningful consultation and stakeholder engagement, which shall include, but not be limited to, public and private higher education institutions, faculty organizations and academic staff associations, recognized professional and disciplinary bodies, research institutions, industry and employer groups, relevant government agencies, and other stakeholders as may be determined by the Commission.

The Framework shall:

- (a) Establish clear national standards, developmental pathways, progression models, and performance benchmarks for faculty development and

research, taking into account disciplinary norms, professional standards, and international best practices;

- (b) Recognize and operationalize differentiated institutional missions, typologies, mandates, and development stages, including distinctions among teaching-focused, research-oriented, and hybrid institutions, and allow for varied approaches consistent with such differentiation;
- (c) Integrate teaching excellence, research productivity, innovation and creative work, graduate education strengthening, and community engagement into a unified and mutually reinforcing faculty development and research agenda;
- (d) Promote coherence and alignment with outcomes-based education, accreditation systems, quality assurance mechanisms, faculty career progression frameworks, and other relevant higher education policies and standards; and
- (e) Provide practical guidance to higher education institutions in the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and periodic review of their respective institutional faculty development and research plans, including priority-setting, resource allocation, and performance assessment.

CHED shall ensure that the Framework is regularly updated to respond to emerging trends, evidence from monitoring and evaluation, and evolving national and global higher education and research contexts.

SEC. 8. *Faculty Development Programs* — Faculty development programs supported under this Act may include, but shall not be limited to, the following structured and developmental interventions, which shall be designed to enhance faculty competence, professional growth, and institutional capacity across the higher education system:

- (a) ***Graduate, post-graduate, sandwich, post-doctoral, and practice-oriented degree programs***, whether undertaken locally or internationally, including joint, dual-degree, or transnational arrangements, intended to deepen disciplinary expertise, strengthen research capacity, and improve teaching effectiveness in fields aligned with institutional mandates and national development priorities;
- (b) ***Teaching and learning innovation initiatives***, including outcomes-based education, digital and blended pedagogy, flexible learning modalities, inclusive and disability-responsive education, assessment reform, and curriculum modernization, aimed at improving instructional quality, learner engagement, and educational relevance;
- (c) ***Research capability-building programs***, including structured training and mentoring in research design, quantitative and qualitative methodologies, scholarly writing and publication, supervision of graduate research, research ethics and compliance, data governance and management, intellectual property protection, and research utilization;
- (d) ***Industry, professional, government, and community immersion programs***, including externships, fellowships, and collaborative engagements, intended to strengthen applied instruction, practice-oriented research, policy relevance, and alignment of academic work with labor market, industry, and societal needs;
- (e) ***Academic leadership, research management, and institutional governance development programs***, including capacity-building for department heads, deans, research directors, and emerging academic leaders, to enhance strategic planning, research administration, quality assurance, and institutional performance; and

- (f) ***Mentoring, peer learning, and communities of practice***, including formal and informal mechanisms for knowledge sharing, interdisciplinary collaboration, faculty networking, and continuous professional learning within and across higher education institutions.

Provided, that faculty development programs shall be aligned with duly approved institutional development and faculty development plans and consistent with national priorities; provided, further, that access to such programs shall be equitable, transparent, merit-based, and supportive of differentiated institutional missions and development stages.

SEC. 9. *Eligibility* — Eligibility for participation in faculty development programs supported under this Act shall be governed by transparent, objective, and merit-based criteria, as may be further specified in the implementing rules and regulations.

To be eligible, an applicant shall

- (a) Be a faculty member of a public or private higher education institution duly recognized by the Commission on Higher Education, with teaching, research, extension, innovation, or academic service functions, whether on permanent, probationary, or contractual status, as may be allowed under applicable rules;
- (b) Be formally endorsed by the concerned higher education institution through its duly authorized academic or administrative authority, certifying that the proposed faculty development activity is consistent with the institution's approved faculty development plan and institutional development priorities;

- (c) Demonstrate readiness, commitment, and capacity to complete the proposed faculty development activity within the prescribed period and to apply the competencies acquired to institutional functions; and
- (d) Satisfy such additional academic, professional, or program-specific requirements as may be prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), taking into account the nature, level, and objectives of the faculty development program.

SEC. 10. *Selection and Prioritization* — In the selection and prioritization of beneficiaries, the Commission on Higher Education shall adopt criteria that promote relevance, equity, and system-wide capacity-building, which may include:

- (a) Alignment of the proposed faculty development activity with institutional mandates, priority disciplines, and national development needs;
- (b) The developmental stage, resource constraints, and geographic location of the higher education institution, with particular consideration given to emerging, underserved, and geographically isolated institutions;
- (c) The potential contribution of the applicant to improvements in teaching quality, research productivity, graduate education strengthening, academic leadership, or institutional performance;
- (d) The need to address disparities in faculty qualifications, disciplinary coverage, or research capacity across regions, sectors, or institution types; and
- (e) The demonstrated commitment of the higher education institution to support the reintegration, deployment, and effective utilization of the faculty member upon completion of the faculty development program.

SEC. 11. *Research Capacity Strengthening* — The Commission on Higher Education shall institutionalize a comprehensive and sustainable higher education research capacity development system designed to strengthen the ability of higher education institutions to generate, manage, disseminate, and utilize research and creative work in support of academic excellence, innovation, and national development.

Such system shall be implemented in a manner that is developmental, inclusive, and responsive to differentiated institutional mandates, and shall include, but not be limited to, the following components:

- (a) ***Support for institutional research and creative work agendas*** aligned with national, regional, and sectoral priorities, including assistance in agenda-setting, thematic clustering, interdisciplinary collaboration, and alignment with the National Research and Development Agenda;
- (b) ***Competitive research grants, seed funding, and early-career researcher support***, including bridge funding, mentoring, and capacity-building interventions, to encourage research initiation, sustain research productivity, and develop the next generation of researchers across disciplines;
- (c) ***Strengthening of research ethics review mechanisms and compliance systems***, including the establishment, accreditation, or enhancement of institutional ethics review boards, training in responsible conduct of research, and adherence to nationally and internationally recognized ethical standards;
- (d) ***Support for research dissemination, publication, utilization, commercialization, and policy translation***, including assistance for publication in refereed or indexed journals, knowledge sharing and open-

access platforms, technology transfer, industry engagement, and integration of research findings into public policy and professional practice;

- (e) ***Enhancement of graduate research supervision and thesis and dissertation advising capacity***, including training, mentoring, workload recognition, and quality assurance mechanisms to ensure rigor, integrity, and timely completion of graduate research; and
- (f) ***Development and shared use of research infrastructure***, including laboratories, research facilities, digital libraries, databases, repositories, and data platforms, as well as inter-institutional and regional research facilities to maximize resource utilization and promote collaboration.

CHED shall adopt appropriate policies, standards, and monitoring mechanisms to ensure that research capacity strengthening initiatives under this Act contribute to sustained improvements in research quality, productivity, utilization, and institutional performance.

SEC. 12. *Alignment with the National Research and Development Agenda* —

Faculty development and research programs supported under this Act shall be aligned and harmonized with the National Research and Development Agenda to ensure that public investments in higher education contribute to national development, innovation, and societal well-being.

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall ensure that faculty development and research initiatives are designed, prioritized, and implemented in support of the thematic priorities, strategic directions, and long-term goals of the National Research and Development Agenda, consistent with academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

To this end, CHED shall encourage and support interdisciplinary, mission-oriented, and problem-driven research responsive to national and regional development needs, and shall promote collaboration among higher education institutions, government agencies, research institutes, industry, civil society organizations, and local communities.

The Commission may adopt coordination mechanisms, priority-setting processes, and joint funding arrangements to strengthen alignment with national research priorities, and shall integrate such alignment into funding eligibility, program evaluation, and performance monitoring under this Act.

SEC. 13. *Faculty Scholarships* — The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall institutionalize and administer a comprehensive, coherent, and sustainable system of faculty scholarships as a core and long-term component of the faculty development framework under this Act, with the primary objective of strengthening faculty qualifications, academic competence, research readiness, and teaching effectiveness across the higher education system.

CHED shall provide scholarships and other forms of financial assistance for qualified faculty members of public and private higher education institutions to pursue advanced studies, professional training, and continuing academic development that respond to institutional needs and national development priorities, including but not limited to the following:

- (a) *Master's, doctoral, post-doctoral, and equivalent advanced studies*, whether undertaken locally or internationally, intended to deepen disciplinary expertise, strengthen research competence, improve

pedagogical practice, and expand the pool of qualified faculty for graduate education and research supervision;

- (b) ***Sandwich, joint, dual-degree, and transnational programs***, including collaborative and mobility-based arrangements with recognized foreign or domestic partner institutions, designed to promote international exposure, academic exchange, access to specialized facilities or expertise, and knowledge transfer to the home institution;
- (c) ***Practice-oriented and professional graduate programs*** aligned with institutional mandates, priority disciplines, and workforce or industry needs, particularly in fields requiring advanced professional competencies or applied expertise; and
- (d) ***Short-term, specialized, and advanced training programs in priority disciplines***, emerging fields, and strategic areas identified by the Commission on Higher Education, including programs addressing pedagogical innovation, research methods, leadership, and technological change.
- (e) ***Engagement of Professors of Practice and qualified practitioners with demonstrated professional, industry, or creative expertise to teach or co-teach in higher education institutions***, with the aim of improving the relevance, quality, and responsiveness of higher education for individuals, through non-tenure, fixed-term, or part-time appointments, which complement—rather than replace—regular faculty positions.

Scholarships may cover tuition and other school fees, stipends or living allowances, research and dissertation or thesis support, travel and mobility expenses, insurance, and other allowable costs necessary for the successful completion of the approved program, subject to standards and guidelines prescribed by the Commission.

Provided, that scholarship awards shall be merit-based, need-sensitive, and aligned with approved institutional faculty development plans and national development priorities, and shall take into account equitable access across regions, disciplines, institutional typologies, and development stages.

SEC. 14. *Research Grants* — The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall provide competitive, transparent, and performance-informed research grants as a central pillar of the research capacity strengthening framework under this Act, with the objective of increasing research productivity, improving research quality, and enhancing the relevance and impact of higher education research.

Research grants shall support faculty-led and institution-based research initiatives that contribute to knowledge creation, innovation, policy development, and societal problem-solving, and may be awarded for, but shall not be limited to, the following purposes:

- (a) ***Basic, applied, policy-oriented, interdisciplinary, and creative research***, consistent with institutional research agendas and aligned with national research and development priorities, including mission-oriented and problem-driven research;
- (b) ***Support for early-career and emerging researchers***, including seed grants, mentoring support, bridge funding, and structured capacity-building interventions to build sustainable research pipelines and reduce entry barriers to research participation;
- (c) ***Graduate research supervision and thesis and dissertation-related research***, including support for adviser training, co-supervision

arrangements, research quality assurance mechanisms, and improvement of completion and publication outcomes;

- (d) ***Collaborative research involving multiple institutions, sectors, or regions***, including partnerships with government agencies, industry, civil society organizations, and international partners, to promote resource sharing, interdisciplinarity, and broader impact; and
- (e) ***Research utilization, commercialization, and policy translation initiatives***, including dissemination activities, technology transfer, knowledge products, and structured engagement with end-users, policymakers, and communities.

Research grants may cover personnel services, research-related expenses, equipment and supplies, fieldwork and data collection, dissemination and publication costs, capacity-building activities, and other necessary expenditures, subject to applicable government accounting, auditing, and procurement rules.

SEC. 15. *Return Service and Accountability* — Recipients of faculty scholarships and research grants under this Act shall be subject to reasonable return service, reporting, and accountability requirements, to ensure that public investments in faculty development and research generate tangible, sustained, and system-wide institutional and societal benefits.

Return service obligations may be rendered through teaching, research, graduate supervision, curriculum and program development, institutional capacity-building, community engagement, or other forms of academic or public service, as may be determined by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in consultation with the concerned higher education institution, taking into account

institutional needs, faculty deployment considerations, and the nature of the support received.

Return service may likewise be rendered within the home institution or, where appropriate, through inter-institutional, regional, or national service arrangements that contribute to broader higher education system development and capacity-building.

Provided, that return service obligations shall be proportionate to the level, duration, and nature of support received, developmental rather than punitive in character, and implemented in a manner that respects academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and due process, and shall not impose unreasonable or excessive burdens on recipients.

CHED shall prescribe clear guidelines on return service duration, modes of service, reporting requirements, monitoring mechanisms, incentives for exemplary service, and remedies for non-compliance, consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

SEC. 16. *Waiver or Deferment on Return Service Obligations* — The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) may, for justifiable and meritorious reasons, grant a waiver or deferment of return service obligations, in whole or in part, where the objectives of the scholarship or research grant have been substantially achieved, where equivalent or superior institutional or public benefit has already accrued, or where compliance is rendered impracticable by serious illness, permanent disability, fortuitous events, further approved studies or research engagements, or other analogous circumstances beyond the control of

the recipient, subject to transparent criteria, due process, and such conditions as may be provided in the implementing rules and regulations.

CHED may further authorize the conversion of return service obligations into alternative forms of service or contribution, including sustained research productivity, graduate supervision, faculty development functions, inter-institutional capacity-building, policy advisory work, curriculum development, or other equivalent academic or public service consistent with the objectives of this Act, subject to monitoring and accountability requirements.

Nothing in this section shall prejudice the authority of the government to impose sanctions or recover public funds in cases of fraud, misrepresentation, or willful non-compliance.

SEC. 17. Establishment of the Faculty Development and Research Fund —

There is hereby created a Faculty Development and Research Fund (FDRF), which shall serve as a dedicated, earmarked, and sustainable funding mechanism to finance faculty development and research programs, projects, and activities implemented pursuant to this Act.

The Fund shall be utilized to support the planning, implementation, and continuous improvement of faculty development initiatives, research capacity strengthening, graduate education enhancement, research infrastructure development, and other related interventions necessary to advance teaching excellence, research productivity, innovation, and institutional performance across the higher education system.

The Faculty Development and Research Fund shall be administered by the Commission on Higher Education in accordance with the policies, standards, and priorities established under this Act and its implementing rules and regulations, and shall be allocated in a manner that is transparent, accountable, performance-informed, and equity-sensitive.

The Fund shall be designed to ensure sustained and predictable support for faculty development and research across public and private higher education institutions, taking into account differentiated institutional mandates, development stages, and regional contexts, and shall complement, rather than duplicate, existing funding mechanisms for higher education, research, and innovation.

SEC. 18. *Sources of the Fund* — The Faculty Development and Research Fund (FDRF) shall be sourced from the following:

- (a) Annual appropriations specifically provided for the purposes of this Act under the General Appropriations Act, which shall constitute the primary and recurring source of funding for faculty development and research programs;
- (b) Ten percent (10%) of the Higher Education Fund, as may be provided by law, which shall be earmarked and automatically allocated to the Faculty Development and Research Fund to ensure sustained and predictable financing for faculty development, research capacity strengthening, and graduate education enhancement across the higher education system;
- (c) Grants, donations, endowments, bequests, and contributions from domestic and foreign sources, whether public or private, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations governing the acceptance and utilization of such funds;

- (d) Additional funding to be derived from provision of memoranda-of-agreements entered into by donor-parties pursuant to Section 3 of Republic Act No. 8525 or the Adopt-A-School Act of 1998;
- (e) Income derived from research and innovation activities, including royalties, licensing fees, intellectual property income, and proceeds from research commercialization or technology transfer initiatives supported under this Act, subject to policies on revenue sharing and reinvestment as may be prescribed by the CHED
- (f) Contributions from partnerships and collaborative arrangements with government agencies, industry, civil society organizations, international development partners, and other stakeholders, including co-funding, matching grants, and joint financing mechanisms aligned with national research and development priorities; and
- (g) Other sources as may be authorized by law, including special purpose funds, trust funds, or future financing mechanisms consistent with the objectives of this Act.

Funds accruing to the Faculty Development and Research Fund shall be used exclusively for the purposes authorized under this Act, shall not revert to the general fund of the National Treasury at the end of the fiscal year, and shall be subject to applicable government accounting, auditing, and reporting rules.

The Commission on Higher Education CHED shall ensure that the mobilization, allocation, and utilization of the Fund are conducted in a transparent, accountable, and performance-informed manner, and shall adopt safeguards to prevent duplication, misuse, or diversion of funds.

SEC. 19. *Performance-Based and Differentiated Allocation* — The Faculty Development and Research Fund shall be allocated through a performance-based and differentiated funding framework designed to promote continuous improvement, institutional capacity-building, equity, and system-wide development, rather than to impose punitive or exclusionary measures.

Such funding framework shall recognize the diversity of institutional mandates, typologies, development stages, and regional contexts within the higher education system, and shall apply performance-based mechanisms in a manner that is developmental, contextualized, and supportive of institutional growth.

The Commission on Higher Education shall design and implement the allocation framework to ensure that all eligible higher education institutions have access to baseline support for faculty development and research, while providing additional incentives and targeted funding to encourage excellence, innovation, strategic alignment, and capacity-building in priority areas.

To this end, CHED shall establish multiple funding windows, which may include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- (a) ***Baseline Institutional Support Window***, which shall provide predictable and minimum levels of funding to support essential faculty development and research activities of higher education institutions, particularly to ensure equitable participation and system-wide capacity development;
- (b) ***Performance-Based Incentive Window***, which shall allocate additional resources based on demonstrated improvements and outcomes in faculty qualifications, research productivity, graduate education capacity, innovation outputs, and institutional or societal impact, using indicators appropriate to institutional typology and development stage;

- (c) ***Strategic National Priority Window***, which shall support faculty development and research initiatives aligned with nationally identified priority disciplines, research themes, or development challenges, including mission-oriented, interdisciplinary, and collaborative programs; and
- (d) ***Capacity-Building and Catch-Up Window***, which shall provide targeted support to emerging, underserved, geographically isolated, or resource-constrained institutions to address identified gaps in faculty qualifications, research infrastructure, and institutional research systems.

CHED shall adopt clear criteria, indicators, and procedures governing access to each funding window, including provisions for institutional eligibility, proposal evaluation, fund release, monitoring, and performance review.

Provided, that no higher education institution shall be denied access to baseline institutional support solely on the basis of performance classification; provided, further, that performance-based allocations shall take into account improvement trajectories and contextual factors, and shall not penalize institutions for structural disadvantages beyond their control.

CHED shall ensure that the allocation of the Fund is transparent, evidence-informed, and subject to regular monitoring and evaluation, and that funding decisions contribute to sustained improvements in faculty development, research capacity, and overall higher education system performance.

SEC. 20. *Performance Indicators* — Performance-based allocations under this Act shall be guided by a balanced, transparent, and differentiated set of performance indicators designed to assess outcomes, improvement trajectories, and impact of faculty development and research investments, and to support evidence-informed funding, planning, and policy decisions.

Performance indicators may include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- (a) ***Faculty qualification and development outcomes***, including improvements in the proportion of faculty with graduate and post-graduate qualifications, participation in faculty development programs, teaching effectiveness, pedagogical innovation, and professional advancement;
- (b) ***Research, innovation, and creative outputs***, including the quantity, quality, relevance, and impact of publications, creative works, patents, intellectual property, externally funded research, and other recognized scholarly outputs appropriate to institutional mandate and discipline;
- (c) ***Graduate education and research supervision capacity***, including the strength and sustainability of graduate programs, faculty capability to supervise theses and dissertations, graduate completion rates, mentoring systems, and compliance with quality assurance and ethical standards;
- (d) ***Institutional and societal impact***, including contributions to public policy, industry and workforce development, innovation ecosystems, community engagement, and the utilization or application of research and academic outputs for social and economic benefit; and
- (e) ***Regional and sectoral contributions***, including responsiveness to regional development priorities, service to underserved or priority sectors, inter-institutional collaboration, and support for balanced regional growth.

The formulation, collection, processing, and use of performance data under this section shall be consistent with the budget execution, performance-informed budgeting, and expenditure accountability frameworks of the Department of Budget and Management, as well as with the accounting, auditing,

documentation, and reporting standards of the Commission on Audit, including applicable rules on financial management, internal control, and audit trails.

SEC. 21. *Safeguards* — The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall establish and enforce comprehensive institutional, procedural, and technical safeguards to ensure fairness, transparency, integrity, and accountability in the application of performance indicators and performance-based mechanisms under this Act.

Such safeguards shall include the adoption of clearly defined and publicly disclosed indicators, standardized and verifiable data sources, and consistent measurement methodologies that are uniformly applied across similarly situated higher education institutions, taking into account differentiated institutional mandates, typologies, and development stages.

CHED shall further institute robust mechanisms for data validation, verification, reconciliation, and correction, including internal controls, audit trails, documentation standards, and data quality assurance processes, consistent with the performance-informed budgeting framework of the Department of Budget and Management and the accounting and auditing rules of the Commission on Audit.

To ensure due process and institutional participation, CHED shall provide structured and accessible opportunities for institutional feedback, clarification, and appeal of performance assessments, including reasonable timelines for submission, review, and resolution, and the issuance of written determinations explaining the basis of funding or performance-related decisions.

The Commission shall periodically conduct systematic reviews and refinements of performance indicators, methodologies, and safeguard mechanisms, informed by monitoring and evaluation results, stakeholder consultations, audit findings, and evolving national development priorities and higher education system needs, to ensure continued relevance, accuracy, proportionality, and policy coherence.

SEC. 22. *Faculty Development and Research Service* — There is hereby created a Faculty Development and Research Service (FDRS) within the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), which shall serve as the primary policy, programmatic, technical, and coordinating unit responsible for the formulation, governance, implementation, monitoring, and continuous improvement of faculty development and research initiatives under this Act.

The FDRS shall function as the central institutional mechanism within CHED to ensure coherence, consistency, and effectiveness in faculty development and research policies, programs, and funding interventions, and shall provide sustained technical leadership in strengthening faculty qualifications, research capacity, graduate education, and innovation across the higher education system.

In the performance of its mandate, the FDRS shall have the following powers and functions:

- (a) Formulate, harmonize, and coordinate national policies, standards, guidelines, and strategic programs on faculty development and research, consistent with this Act, national education reform priorities, the National Research and Development Agenda, and applicable international commitments and best practices;

- (b) Administer, manage, and oversee the Faculty Development and Research Fund, including the development of funding guidelines, evaluation and approval of proposals, release and utilization of funds, financial reporting, and enforcement of fiscal accountability, in accordance with the budget execution rules of the Department of Budget and Management and the accounting and auditing standards of the Commission on Audit;
- (c) Design, implement, and maintain comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems to assess program implementation, outcomes, impact, and value for money of faculty development and research initiatives, and to generate evidence for planning, performance-based funding, and policy refinement;
- (d) Develop, operate, and sustain integrated faculty development and research data systems and analytics, including centralized databases, registries, dashboards, and reporting platforms, to support evidence-based decision-making, transparency, public accountability, and compliance with government data governance policies;
- (e) Coordinate, consult, and collaborate with relevant government agencies, higher education institutions, research institutions, industry partners, professional associations, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders to promote policy coherence, resource mobilization, inter-institutional collaboration, and alignment of faculty development and research initiatives with national, regional, and sectoral priorities;
- (f) Provide technical assistance, capacity-building, and advisory support to higher education institutions in the formulation and implementation of faculty development and research plans, including assistance in program design, monitoring, reporting, and compliance with quality assurance and accountability requirements;

- (g) Facilitate partnerships, research clustering, and Centers of Excellence initiatives, in coordination with concerned agencies and institutions, to strengthen collaboration, shared infrastructure use, and system-wide research capacity development; and
- (h) Perform such other functions as may be necessary, incidental, or complementary to the effective implementation of this Act and the attainment of its objectives, as may be authorized by the Commission on Higher Education.

The Faculty Development and Research Service shall operate in accordance with the principles of transparency, accountability, performance orientation, academic freedom, and institutional autonomy, and shall be subject to applicable civil service laws, government budgeting and financial management rules, and audit, oversight, and reporting requirements under existing laws.

SEC. 23. *Institutional Responsibilities of Higher Education Institutions* —

Higher education institutions shall bear primary responsibility for the effective implementation of faculty development and research initiatives under this Act, consistent with their academic mission, institutional autonomy, and accountability for the use of public resources.

To this end, higher education institutions shall:

- (a) Develop, adopt, and implement comprehensive faculty development and research plans aligned with the National Faculty Development and Research Framework and other relevant national policies, which shall articulate institutional priorities, strategies, timelines, resource

- requirements, and performance targets for faculty development and research activities;
- (b) Establish and maintain appropriate internal governance, ethics, and support mechanisms for research and creative work, including research management offices or units, ethics review boards, policies on responsible conduct of research, data governance systems, and administrative support structures necessary to ensure compliance with quality, ethical, and regulatory standards;
 - (c) Adopt, institutionalize, and periodically update an Intellectual Property Manual, which shall govern the ownership, protection, management, utilization, commercialization, revenue-sharing, and disposition of intellectual property arising from faculty research, creative work, innovation, and collaborative projects, including those funded under this Act, consistent with existing intellectual property laws, CHED policies, and applicable government regulations;
 - (d) Ensure transparent, equitable, and merit-based identification, nomination, and selection of faculty beneficiaries for scholarships, research grants, and other faculty development and research opportunities, based on clearly defined criteria, institutional needs, and development priorities, and in a manner that promotes fairness, inclusivity, and accountability;
 - (e) Provide appropriate institutional support and enabling conditions to faculty members participating in development and research programs, including workload adjustments, reintegration and deployment mechanisms, mentoring arrangements, and opportunities to apply acquired competencies to teaching, research, graduate supervision, innovation, and academic leadership roles;

- (f) Monitor and evaluate institutional faculty development and research activities, including tracking of participation, completion, outcomes, research utilization, and impact, and use such information for continuous improvement, planning, and alignment with performance-based funding and accountability requirements;
- (g) Submit accurate, timely, and complete performance, financial, and utilization reports to CHED, in accordance with prescribed formats, timelines, and data standards, and consistent with the budgeting, accounting, and auditing requirements of the Department of Budget and Management and the Commission on Audit; and
- (h) Cooperate with monitoring, evaluation, audit, and verification processes conducted by CHED and other authorized government entities, and take appropriate corrective or remedial actions in response to findings, recommendations, or audit observations.

Higher education institutions shall ensure that responsibilities under this section are carried out in a manner that upholds academic freedom, institutional autonomy, transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of public resources, and that contributes to sustained improvements in faculty qualifications, research capacity, innovation outcomes, and overall institutional performance.

SEC. 24. *Equity and Regional Development* — The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall adopt and implement comprehensive, equity-sensitive measures to promote inclusive growth and balanced regional development within the higher education system, recognizing disparities in institutional capacity, geographic access, resource availability, and faculty qualifications across regions and sectors.

To this end, the Commission on Higher Education shall provide targeted, differentiated, and sustained support to emerging, geographically isolated, disadvantaged, and resource-constrained higher education institutions, including state universities and colleges, local universities and colleges, and private institutions serving underserved or priority communities.

Such measures may include, but shall not be limited to, preferential access to baseline institutional support, capacity-building and catch-up funding, targeted faculty scholarships and research grants, technical assistance for institutional planning and research governance, shared research infrastructure arrangements, mentoring and partnership programs with more developed institutions, and priority consideration under strategic national funding windows.

CHED shall ensure that equity-oriented interventions are designed to address structural constraints, support institutional improvement trajectories, and enable institutions in less developed regions to progressively strengthen faculty qualifications, research capacity, graduate education, and academic offerings, without compromising quality standards.

In implementing this provision, the Commission shall take into account regional development plans, sectoral needs, and national development priorities, and shall coordinate with relevant government agencies, local government units, and development partners to maximize impact, avoid duplication, and promote sustainable regional higher education ecosystems.

The effectiveness of equity and regional development measures shall be subject to regular monitoring and evaluation, and the results thereof shall inform policy refinement, funding allocation, and future program design under this Act.

SEC. 25. *National Higher Educational Research Repository* — The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall establish, maintain, and administer a National Higher Education Research Repository, which shall serve as a centralized, publicly accessible, and secure online platform for the collection, archiving, dissemination, and preservation of research outputs produced by higher education institutions.

The Repository shall include, but shall not be limited to, research papers, theses, dissertations, technical reports, policy papers, creative works, and other scholarly outputs generated by faculty members, researchers, and graduate students of public and private higher education institutions, particularly those funded in whole or in part by public funds or supported under this Act.

CHED shall prescribe policies, standards, and technical guidelines governing the submission, metadata requirements, access levels, interoperability, citation, and long-term digital preservation of research outputs in the Repository, consistent with existing laws on intellectual property, data privacy, national security, and open access.

Provided, that higher education institutions shall be required to submit or cause the submission of eligible research outputs to the Repository within a reasonable period after completion, publication, or acceptance, subject to allowable embargo periods, confidentiality restrictions, intellectual property considerations, and other limitations as may be provided in the implementing rules and regulations.

The Repository shall be designed to:

- (a) Promote transparency, knowledge sharing, and public access to publicly funded research;
- (b) Support research utilization, policy translation, innovation, and collaboration;
- (c) Serve as an evidence base for higher education planning, monitoring, and evaluation; and
- (d) Strengthen the visibility, impact, and global competitiveness of Philippine higher education research.

CHED shall ensure that the development, operation, and maintenance of the Repository comply with applicable government information and communications technology standards, data governance policies, and accounting, auditing, and reporting requirements

SEC. 26. *Mandatory Submission and Publication of Research Outputs* — All higher education institutions shall require the submission and publication of eligible research outputs through the National Higher Education Research Repository established under this Act, in accordance with the policies, standards, and technical guidelines prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

For purposes of this Act, eligible research outputs shall include, but shall not be limited to, peer-reviewed research papers, theses, dissertations, technical and policy papers, terminal reports, and other scholarly or creative works produced by faculty members, researchers, and graduate students of public and private

higher education institutions, particularly those funded in whole or in part by public funds or supported under this Act.

Submission to the Repository shall be a mandatory condition for:

- (a) The completion and close-out of research projects funded or supported under this Act;
- (b) The release of final tranches of research grants or institutional research funding;
- (c) Compliance with faculty scholarship, research grant, and return service requirements; and
- (d) Institutional reporting, monitoring, and performance evaluation by CHED.

Provided, that voluntary submission of research outputs to the Repository by faculty members, researchers, or higher education institutions, even when such outputs are not required to be mandatorily deposited under this Act, shall be recognized as valid compliance with publication, dissemination, or public access requirements imposed by CHED or by institutional research policies, unless a more stringent requirement is expressly prescribed.

Provided, further, that CHED may allow reasonable embargo periods, restricted access levels, or deferred publication in cases involving intellectual property protection, publication agreements, national security considerations, data privacy, or other justifiable grounds, subject to clear criteria and documentation requirements to be provided in the implementing rules and regulations.

Higher education institutions shall integrate compliance with Repository submission requirements into their internal research governance systems,

including research management offices, ethics review processes, intellectual property manuals, and institutional reporting mechanisms.

Failure to comply with the mandatory submission and publication requirements under this section, without justifiable cause, shall be a ground for the withholding, suspension, or recovery of funding, or the imposition of other appropriate administrative measures, subject to due process and applicable laws.

SEC. 27. *Non-Impairment Clause* — Nothing in this Act, nor in the implementation of any provision hereof, shall be interpreted to impair or restrict academic freedom, institutional autonomy, or the right to due process, as guaranteed under the Constitution and existing laws, nor to authorize any action that would unduly interfere with the lawful governance, academic judgment, or internal management of higher education institutions.

SEC. 28. *Monitoring and Evaluation* — The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall establish, institutionalize, and maintain a comprehensive, results-oriented, and integrated monitoring and evaluation system to assess the implementation, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of faculty development and research programs, projects, and activities under this Act.

Such monitoring and evaluation system shall cover, among others, program implementation progress, performance outcomes, utilization of funds, compliance with policy and accountability requirements, regional and sectoral distribution of benefits, and the contribution of faculty development and research investments to institutional improvement and national development objectives.

SEC. 29. *Annual Reporting to Congress* — The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall submit to Congress an Annual Faculty Development and Research Report, which shall present a consolidated and evidence-based account of outcomes achieved, funding utilization and financial performance, geographic and institutional distribution of resources, challenges encountered, best practices identified, and policy gaps observed, and which shall include specific recommendations for legislative action, budgetary adjustments, or policy reforms as may be necessary to strengthen the implementation of this Act.

The Annual Report shall be submitted within a reasonable period after the close of each fiscal year, in accordance with standards prescribed by law, and shall serve as a key instrument for congressional oversight, performance-informed budgeting, and continuous policy improvement.

SEC. 30. *Implementing Rules and Regulations* — Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations.

SEC. 31. *Appropriations* — The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 32. *Separability Clause* — If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 33. *Repealing Clause* — All laws, rules, regulations, and issuances inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 34. *Effectivity* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,