

FG Spends N23bn on Research across Nigeria – TETFund

The Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), said it has so far spent over N23 billion on funding research in the country and desirous to see how the research projects can be linked to industry and get viable outcomes to help Nigeria move forward. The Director, Research and Development (R&D) of TETFund, represented by Dr. Hadiza Ismail, Assistant Director in the department, made this known at a validation workshop on "Strengthening Research and Innovation Funding Agencies in West Africa, which took place at the Fund's headquarters in Abuja. He said the agency was committed to the establishment of a Science Granting Council in Nigeria, adding that the Fund has continued to financially support research through the National Research Fund. He also said that the Fund was also working hard to ensure that research outputs are linked to industry to bring about the desired development. He further said; "So far, the Fund has spent over N23 billion on about 912 research projects that have been sponsored. But that also gives us an insight into the need for this workshop and what we are actually talking about. "Despite the fact that we have given

According to him; "Nigeria specifically has an issue currently because they do not yet have a well-recognized national research and innovation funding agency, and that is part of why we are here to work with appropriate agencies and stakeholders within the science and innovation ecosystem to see how we can establish a functional science and innovation funding agency in Nigeria. "Other countries in Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa, already have these councils functional, and because of that, they are able to receive funding from agencies across the world to support research and development.

"Currently, TETFund is standing in as the representative council for Nigeria, but we are saying we should best situate the national research and innovation funding agency in an appropriate establishment that focuses on innovation, like the Ministry of Science and Innovation," he said. Also speaking, the President of African University of Science and Technology (AUST), Abuja, Professor Peter Onwualu, who harped on the importance of

innovation in bringing about development, said the workshop was expected to usher in a functional science granting council in Nigeria. He said; "We know that in this country, we need the results of science and technology, which usually translate into innovation. Innovation that can produce goods and services to make sure our economy runs well, but

we have to have a good institutional framework for doing research in Nigeria, and that is all this project is all about. "We believe the outcome of this workshop will make Nigeria have a functional science granting council that can finance and fund research in all sectors of the economy; universities, Polytechnics, research institutes, private sector organizations, SMEs, and even the informal sector. "These people you see on the streets inventing one thing or another, we need to garner support to be able to support them to move from research to goods and services," he said.



grants to over 900 projects, we want to see how we can link these research projects to industry and get viable outcomes at the end of the day to help Nigeria move forward," he said.

On his part, the Executive Director, African Technology Policy Studies (ATPS) Network, Professor Nicholas Ozor, said the workshop was aimed at giving momentum to the project designed to strengthen national research council's in six West African countries. Ozor however, expressed concerns about the non-existence of a national research and innovation funding agency in Nigeria, saying the absence has denied the country's ability to attract foreign grants for research.