MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



INSIDE MUST RI

Research • Innovation • Commercialization

SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER



FEATURED STORY

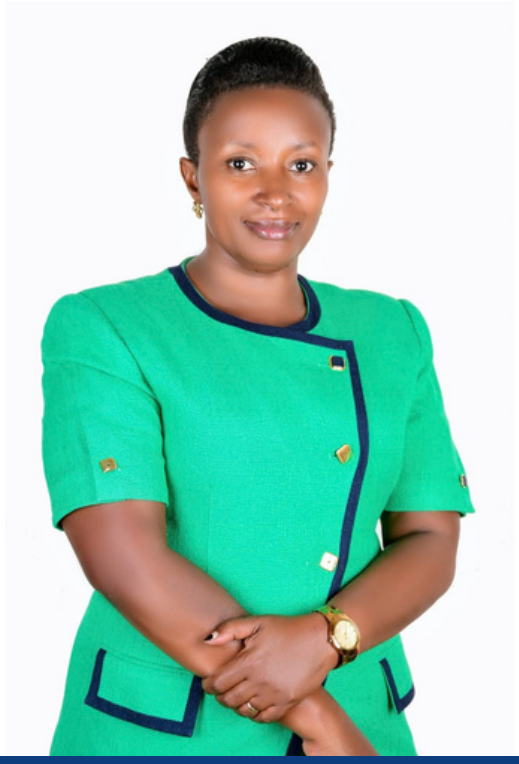
FROM CLASSROOMS TO REAL-WORLD SOLUTIONS: CITT STUDENT INNOVATIONS AND SEED GRANT AWARDS

Twenty-one students completed an eight-week internship at the Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer (CITT) at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST). The experiential learning program focused on technology development, innovation, and practical project implementation to solve sector-specific challenges.

Key student-developed innovations presented at the end of the internship included:

- i-SOFT Application: Connects users to agricultural markets and products, including an organic fertiliser.
- Wildwatch Application: Tracks human-wildlife conflicts in Uganda's protected areas.
- Fuel Guard: Monitors fuel station pumps and sales performance.
- Sign Bridge: Translates voice and sign language into text or speech.
- VR Learning Solution: Delivers immersive training on ICU operations.
- CITT Database Management System: Streamlines internal data management.

Additionally, CITT awarded 10 teams in its Quarter One 2026/2027 Seed Grant competition to advance projects toward commercialisation.



INSIDE MUST RI

BUILDING A

RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION ECOSYSTEM FOR IMPACT.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the September 2026 edition of the MUST Research Institute Newsletter, highlighting a vibrant month of research, innovation, partnerships, institutional development and engagement across MUST.

This edition showcases activities that demonstrate MUST's growing research and innovation ecosystem. We highlight key institutional engagements and strategic partnerships, including the Muni University benchmarking visit focused on research management, technology transfer and commercialization, as well as MUST's hosting of the Western Region Debates of the 2nd National Inter-University Debate Competition.

We also feature the MUST Clinical and Research Laboratory's progress towards accreditation and MUST-PEDC's field research on the Parish Development Model, demonstrating the role of research in generating evidence for policy and societal transformation.

Innovation and commercialization feature prominently, with CITT advancing student innovation, multidisciplinary ideation, technology transfer and entrepreneurship, including the award of Product Development and Commercialisation Seed Grants to 10 innovation teams.

This edition also provides a snapshot of MUST's research and grants portfolio, highlighting our progress and opportunities to broaden participation across the University. Together, these stories demonstrate our continued commitment to strengthening research, innovation and commercialization for institutional growth and societal impact.

Assoc. Professor. Angella Musiimenta
Chief Research Officer (CRO), MUST RI

MEET MUST RI



WHY MUST RI?

Strategic Rationale. MUST RI has been established to coordinate, strengthen and accelerate MUST's research and innovation ecosystem to deliver greater national socioeconomic impact.

Aspiration: To position MUST as a leading research, innovation and commercialization hub that transforms scientific discoveries into innovative technologies, commercially viable products, competitive enterprises, and evidence-informed policies that accelerate industrialization, improve lives, and drive sustainable socioeconomic transformation.

MUST RESEARCH INSTITUTE (MUST RI)

A multidisciplinary research, innovation and commercialization ecosystem driving knowledge, innovation, evidence and impact for societal transformation.

CENTRES AND UNITS

PHARMBIOTRAC
(Pharm-Biotechnology and Traditional Medicine Centre)
for pharmaceutical biotechnology and herbal-medicine science.

CITT
(Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer)
for technology transfer and commercialization.

TFCC
(Tropical Forest Conservation) Centre
for biodiversity research and eco-tourism.

MNCH
(Maternal, New born, and Child Health) centre
for new born, child and maternal health research.

MUST PEDC
(MUST Policy, Economic and Data Centre)
for AI-enabled policy briefs.

MUST LABORATORY SERVICES
for clinical, biomedical, and translational research.

ENTREP
(Entrepreneurship) Centre
for Business incubation and development

RESEARCH AFFILIATES
Faculty Research groups and Independent Researchers

MUST GRANTS OFFICE
Supporting Unit for All Centres and Units

- Provides pre- and post-award grant support
- Facilitates innovations management and commercialization
- Ensures compliance, reporting, and grant accountability

MISSION

To foster multidisciplinary research and innovation to generate solutions for sustainable development.

VISION

To be a center of excellence in science and technology research and innovation

FOLLOW US:
linkedin.com/company/mustresearchinstitute.

CONTACT US:
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MEET MUST RI



MUST RI: The Institutional Platform for Achieving MUST's Research Aspiration of Leading in Research, Innovation and Commercialisation. This is achieved through:

1. COORDINATION & INTEGRATION	2. ENABLEMENT & INVESTMENT	3. GOVERNANCE & AMPLIFYING IMPACT
Break research silos	Remove barriers to quality research	Strengthen research governance & compliance
Promote multidisciplinary research	Optimize infrastructure & expertise	Strengthen accountability & quality assurance
Connect faculties, centres & units	Build researcher & innovation capacity	Translate research into policy, practice & commercialization
Strengthen partnerships	Mobilize and strategically deploy research resources	Increase visibility, reputation & rankings

MUNI UNIVERSITY BENCHMARKING VISIT TO MUST



On 15 September 2026, MUST hosted a delegation from Muni University at Kihumuro Campus for a benchmarking visit focused on research, innovation and commercialisation.

Organised through MUST RI, the visit aimed to strengthen Muni University's research management, technology transfer and commercialisation strategies, particularly for its Business Incubation Centre. The delegation was led by Assoc. Prof. Jonathan Izudi, Senior Research Officer at Muni University.

The session was led by Assoc. Prof. Angella Musiimenta, Chief Research Officer, who presented on research coordination and facilitated the engagement. Other presentations included Dr. Medard Twinamatsiko, Director CITT, on advancing innovation and intellectual property, and the Director of the Entrepreneurship Centre on transforming skills, ideas, innovations and partnerships into viable enterprises.

The visit concluded with tours of key MUST facilities, including the Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer (CITT) and PHARMBIOTRAC laboratories, providing practical insights into MUST's research, innovation and commercialisation ecosystem.





WHY MUST RI MATTERS



During the MUST Heads of Department Retreat organised by the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO), Prinari Behangana, the Chief Research Officer (CRO), Assoc. Prof. Angella Musiimenta, facilitated an interactive session on “Positioning MUST as a Leader in Resource Mobilization and Partnerships.”

The session challenged departments to move beyond dependence on institutional budgets and government seed research grants and embrace resource mobilization as a shared institutional responsibility. The CRO emphasized that resources extend beyond financials to include expertise, infrastructure, equipment, data, technology, networks and influence. Departments were encouraged to identify and package their “bankable assets,” prioritize their most critical resource gaps, and strategically engage government, industry, funders, universities, research institutes, development partners, alumni and other potential partners.

The session also emphasized building sustainable institutional partnerships based on strategic fit, complementarity and mutual benefit rather than relationships dependent on individuals.

As a take-home exercise, each department was given a 90-day commitment to identify a funding/resource opportunity, engage or re-engage a strategic partner, package a departmental asset, develop a collaborative initiative, and identify support required from MUST RI/MGO. These outputs will feed into a coordinated MUST-wide resource mobilization and partnership pipeline



SEPTEMBER 2026 AT

MUST RI

CENTRE/UNIT SPOTLIGHT



MUST-PEDC TRAINS AND DEPLOYS DATA COLLECTORS FOR PDM STUDY



The Parish Development Model (PDM) is Uganda's strategy to accelerate wealth creation and move households from subsistence to the money economy. The Mbarara University of Science and Technology Policy and Economic Data Center (MUST-PEDC) is conducting a field-documentation initiative across Uganda to evaluate how PDM financing impacts household living standards, enterprise success, and local economies.

Spanning Western, Central, and Eastern regions, MUST-PEDC's research captures real-world beneficiary experiences across diverse sectors, including agriculture, livestock, fisheries, and value addition. Field findings highlight varied investment pathways:

- Cocoa & Coffee: In Butaleja, a beneficiary turned UGX 995,000 into two acres of cocoa, generating harvest income and establishing a seedling nursery. In Mitooma, investments in piggery and coffee created immediate and long-term security.
- Fisheries & Enterprise: In Buvuma, capital enabled net and boat expansion, though regulatory shifts like fishing bans impacted returns. In Jinja, the 20-member Nalufenya Women Development Link scaled their sweet wine business.

MUST-PEDC's evidence reveals that capital disbursement alone is insufficient for sustainable growth. Long-term success requires technical guidance, skills training, infrastructure—such as the Ssezibwa Bridge and Kibuku milk-cooling facilities—and access to structured markets. Through these insights, MUST-PEDC bridges community realities with policy implementation to strengthen economic decision-making.

SEPTEMBER 2026 AT

MUST RI

CENTRE/UNIT SPOTLIGHT



NATIONAL DRUG AUTHORITY (NDA) CONDUCTS GMP INSPECTION OF PHARMBIOTRAC



Pharmbiotrac. The National Drug Authority (NDA) conducted an inspection of the PHARMBIOTRAC facility at MUST, beginning with an opening meeting in the Estates Board Room to outline the scope and review production activities.

Led by Dr. Angupale Jimmy Ronald, inspectors and PHARMBIOTRAC members toured the premises, auditing infrastructure, production and storage areas, quality control setups, and documentation systems to evaluate compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and regulatory standards for herbal medicinal products.

At the closing meeting, NDA inspectors commended PHARMBIOTRAC for advancing indigenous knowledge into viable herbal remedies and establishing robust Quality Management Systems (QMS). They declared that the facility qualifies for an annual operating license and suitability of premises certificate. However, full GMP certification requires closing identified staffing gaps.

PHARMBIOTRAC Centre Leader Associate Professor Casim Umba Tolo expressed gratitude for the NDA's guidance and confirmed the Centre's commitment to implementing the recommendations for continuous improvement.



MUST CLINICAL AND RESEARCH LABORATORY HOLDS AN INITIAL LABORATORY AUDIT FOR ACCREDITATION.



For the last two days, MCRL has had an initial assessment audit. This involved a team from accredited laboratories around MCRL. I have had a nice of learning of how to streamline the procedures towards attaining accreditation. We had a close assessment of all the steps and the assessors were pleased that work has been started and recommended more funding to complete the process and attain full accreditation.

An initial laboratory audit/ assessment is a critical step in establishing laboratory quality and technical competence. It enables the laboratory to identify gaps, strengthen its quality management system, improve the reliability of test results, and demonstrate compliance with internationally recognized accreditation requirements. It is important to distinguish an internal or preliminary audit, which prepares the laboratory for accreditation, from the formal external assessment conducted by the accreditation body that leads to an accreditation decision

SEPTEMBER 2026 AT
MUST RI



TFCC COMPLETES FIELD DATA COLLECTION ON LAND-USE PRESSURES IN BWINDI



TFCC field staff completed data collection in late September for the project on land-use pressures on the conservation of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, SW Uganda. Five sites representing different crop-based agricultural systems were selected for the study.

Preliminary findings indicate substantial unauthorised extraction of forest resources from the park. The most common human activities encountered include hunting of forest antelopes and bush pigs using snares made from bush rope or wire cables attached to saplings and harvesting of trees of varying sizes and types for various purposes - building poles, fuelwood, bean stakes and carving of household items such as beehives, stamping mortars and pestles, hoe handles, spoons, among others.

Over the coming months, we shall process and interpret the field information to discern relationships between land-use practices and behaviour adjacent to the park, water quality in streams draining community land, and wildlife species and unauthorised activities encountered within the park, and report the findings.

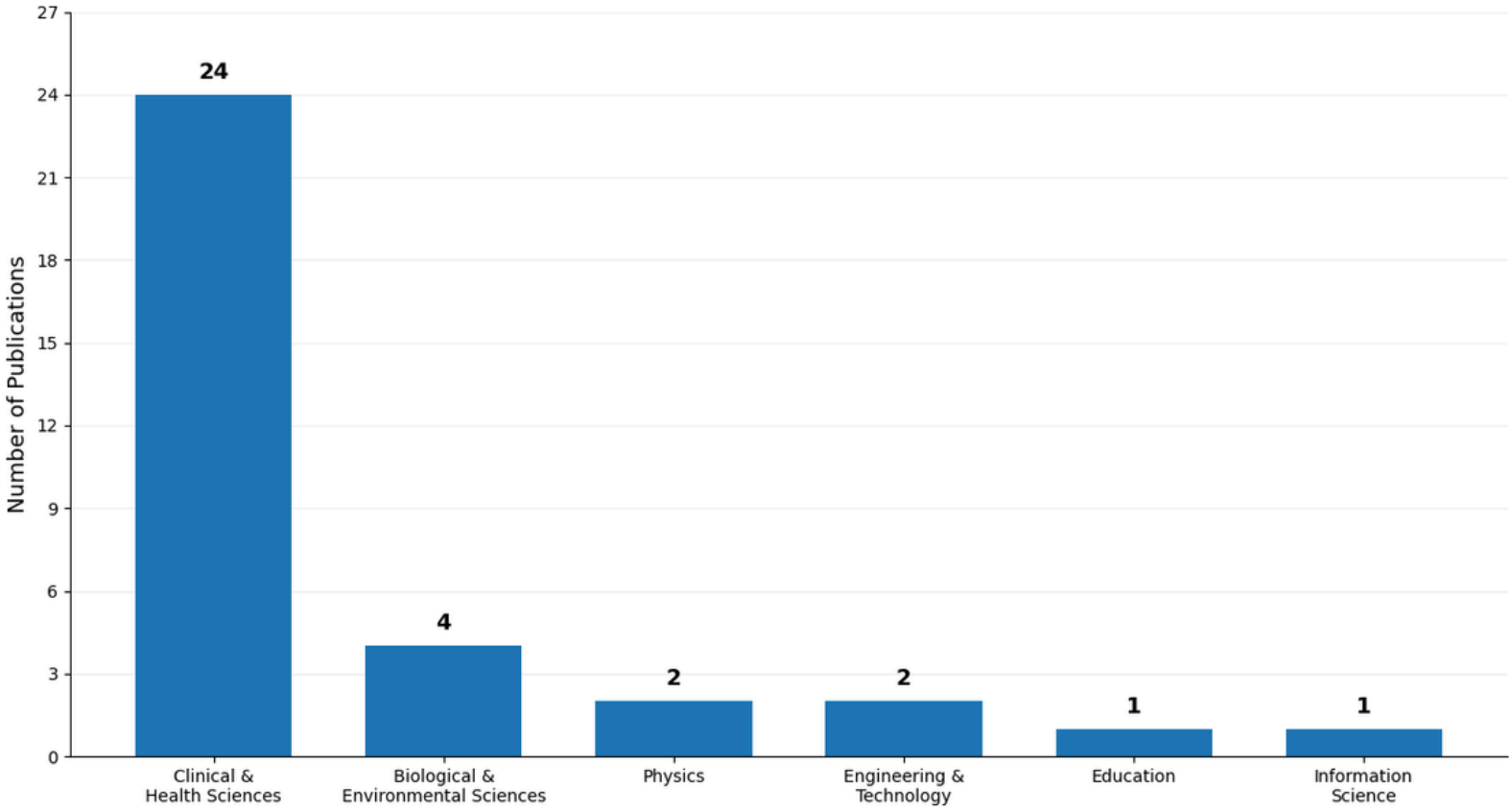
BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE VENTURE PIPELINE: MUST ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE PROGRESS UPDATE



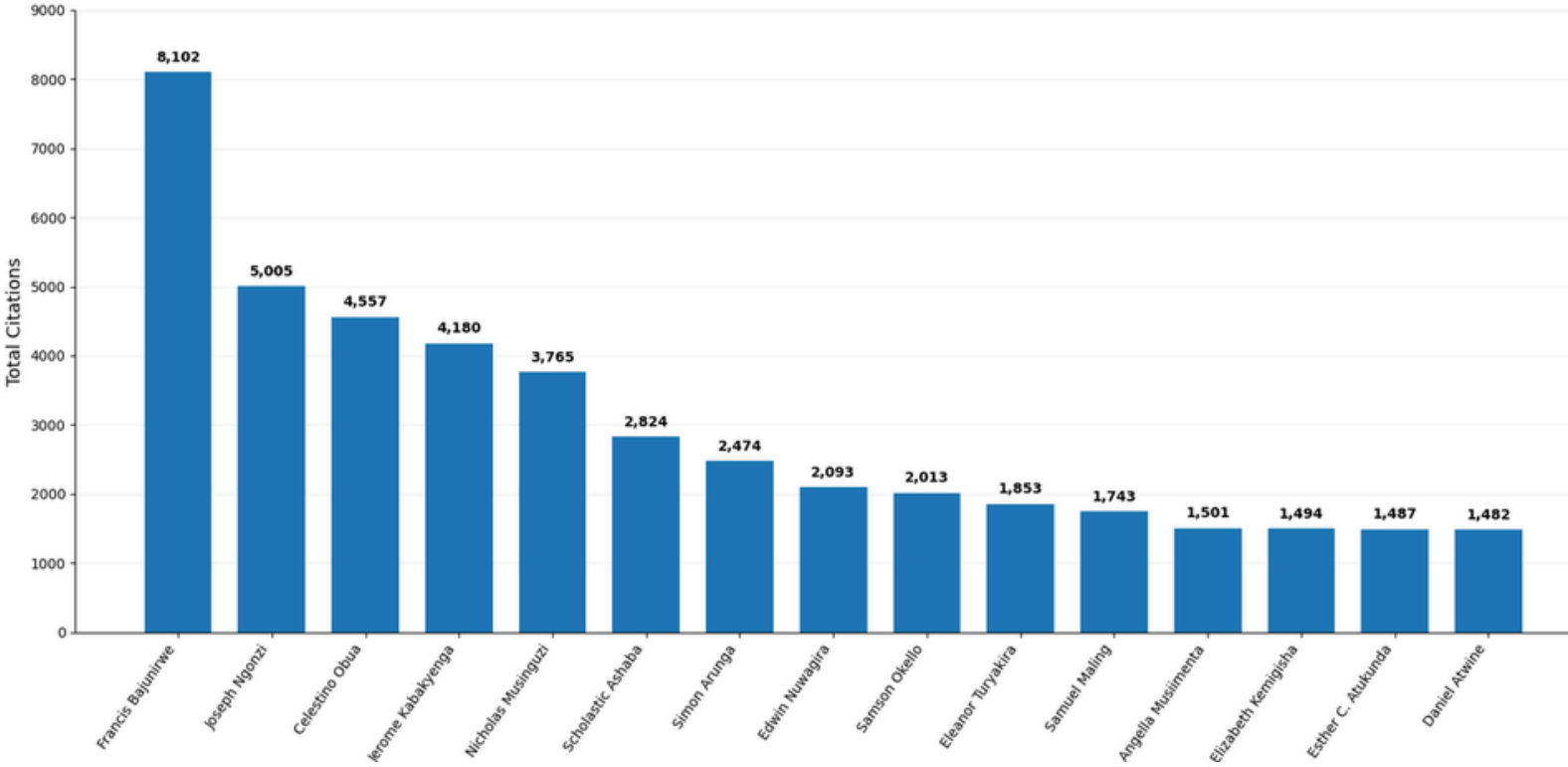
Following benchmarking visits to the University of Ghana and SLab Africa (Nairobi), the MUST Entrepreneurship Centre is establishing operational, governance, and funding frameworks ahead of its official launch in February 2027—drawing on key learnings in grant writing, sustainable venture pipelines, and Advisory Committee governance models.

To ensure long-term sustainability, immediate priorities focus on finalising staff recruitment, operationalising facilities, and securing executive alignment, alongside upcoming initiatives such as an Industry-Academia meeting in November 2026 with partners like Nile Breweries, a Mastercard-partnered Innovation Cafe, and an undergraduate student exchange program to Belgium scheduled for April 2027.

Distribution of MUST Scopus-Indexed Publications by Discipline (July–Aug. 2026; Total Publications = 34)



15 Most Cited Researchers at MUST (Total Citations; AD Scientific Index, 4 July 2026)



UPCOMING EVENTS

MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Succeed we Must

Wish to change the world through Research & Innovation?

The Vice Chancellor
Prof. Pauline Byakika-Kibwika
is asking you to

Save the DATE

18/11/2026
4th Mentors' Workshop

19/11/2026
11th PhD Symposium

20/11/2026
21st ARDC

Organised by the Faculty of Science



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