# MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

**KNOWN ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:**

This MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT ("Agreement") is made and entered into by and among:

The **UNITED STARTUPS AND STARTUP ENABLERS FOR WEALTH-CREATION, ACCELERATION, AND GROWTH (USWAG Eastern Visayas Consortium),** a regional startup and innovation consortium in Eastern Visayas, hereinafter referred to as the **"CONSORTIUM"** co-convened by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST VIII), a government agency under the Department of Science and Technology mandated to promote and support science, technology, and innovation in Region VIII, with principal office at DOST VIII, Government Center, Palo, Leyte, represented by its Regional Director, **DR. JOHN GLENN D. OCAÑA,** herein referred to as the "Consortium Chair;

**Consortium Secretariat:**

The **Samar State University (SSU),** a higher education institution created by virtue of Republic Act No. 9313, with principal office at Brgy. Guindapunan, Catbalogan City, Samar, herein represented by its University President, **DR. REDENTOR S. PALENCIA,** referred to as the "Consortium Secretariat";

**HEIs**:

The **Samar State University (SSU)**, a higher education institution, with principal office at Brgy. Guindapunan, Catbalogan City, Samar, herein represented in this Agreement by its University President, **DR. REDENTOR S. PALENCIA;**

The **Biliran Province State University (BiPSU),** a higher education institution, with principal office at Brgy. P.I. Garcia, Naval, Biliran, herein represented in this Agreement by its University President, **DR. VICTOR C. CAÑEZO JR.;**

The **Catbalogan City Community College (CCCC),** a higher education institution, with principal office at Brgy. Payao, Catbalogan City, Samar, herein represented by its Chairman of the board, **HON. DEXTER UY;**

The **Eastern Samar State University (ESSU),** a public higher education institution, with principal office at Brgy. Maypangdan, Borongan, Eastern Samar, herein represented by its University President, **DR. ANDRES C. PAGATPATAN JR.;**

The **Eastern Visayas State University (EVSU),** a public higher education institution, with principal office at Salazar St., Tacloban City, Leyte, herein represented by its University President, **DR. DENNIS C. DE PAZ;**

The **Leyte Normal University (LNU),** a public higher education institution, with principal office at P. Paterno St., Tacloban City, Leyte, herein represented by its Officer-in-Charge, University President, **DR. JONAS P. VILLAS;**

The **Northwest Samar State University (NwSSU),** a public higher education institution, with principal office at Rueda Street, Calbayog City, Samar, herein represented by its University President, **DR. BENJAMIN L. PECAYO;**

The **Palompon Institute of Technology (PIT),** a public higher education institution, with principal office at Evangelista Street, Palompon, Leyte, herein represented by its College President, **DR. DENNIS ANOTA M. DEL PILAR;**

The **Samar Colleges, Inc. (SC)**, a private higher education institution, with principal office at Brgy. San Pablo, Catbalogan City, Samar, herein represented by its College President, **MR. RHETT CAESAR L. PICZON;**

The **Southern Leyte State University (SLSU),** a public higher education institution, with principal office at Brgy. San Roque, Sogod, Southern Leyte, herein represented by its University President, **DR. JUDE A. DUARTE;**

The **St. Paul School of Professional Studies (SPSPS),** a private higher education institution, with principal office at Brgy. Campetic, Palo, Leyte, herein represented by its School President, **DR. ERWIN VINCENT G. ALCALA;**

The **St. Scholastica's College Tacloban Inc. (SSCTI),** a private higher education institution, with principal office at Brgy. Campetic, Palo, Leyte, herein represented by its School President, **SR. M. ROSARIO R. OBINIANA;**

The **University of Eastern Philippines (UEP),** a public higher education institution, with principal office at University Town, Catarman, Northern Samar, herein represented by its University President, **DR. CHERRY I. ULTRA;**

The **University of the Philippines Tacloban College (UP Tacloban),** a public higher education institution, with principal office at Magsaysay Boulevard, corner Sto. Niño Street, herein represented by its Campus Dean, **DR. PATRICIA B. ARINTO;**

The **Visayas State University (VSU),** a public higher education institution, with principal office at Pangasugan, Baybay City, Leyte, herein represented by its University President, **DR. PROSE IVY G. YEPES;**

**LGUs:**

The **City of Baybay, Leyte,** a Local Government Unit (LGU) duly organized and existing under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, with principal office at Brgy. Gaas, Baybay City, Leyte, herein represented by its City Mayor, **HON. JOSE CARLOS L. CARI;**

The **City of Calbayog, Samar,** a Local Government Unit (LGU) duly organized and existing under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, with principal office at J.D. Avelino Avenue, Calbayog City, Samar, herein represented by its City Mayor, **HON. RAYMUND C. UY;**

The **City of Catbalogan, Samar,** a Local Government Unit (LGU) duly organized and existing under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, with principal office at Rizal Avenue, Brgy. 4, Catbalogan City, Samar, herein represented by its City Mayor, **HON. DEXTER M. UY;**

The **City of Ormoc, Leyte,** a Local Government Unit (LGU) duly organized and existing under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, with principal office at Anubing Street, Ormoc City, Leyte, herein represented by its City Mayor, **HON. LUCY TORRES-GOMEZ;**

The **City of Tacloban, Leyte,** a Local Government Unit (LGU) duly organized and existing under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, with principal office at

Brgy. 25, Kanhuraw Hill, Tacloban City, Leyte, herein represented by its City Mayor, **HON. ALFRED S. ROMUALDEZ;**

The **Province of Samar**, a Local Government Unit (LGU) duly organized and existing under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, with principal office at Provincial Capitol Building, Catbalogan City, Samar, herein represented by its Governor, **HON. SHAREE ANN T. TAN;**

**NGAs:**

The **Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) Region VIII**, a national government agency created under Republic Act 10844 tasked with planning, developing and promoting the national information and communication development agenda, with principal office at Mabini Street, Tacloban City, Leyte, herein represented by its OIC-Regional Director, **ATTY. MELVYN CARLO T. BARROA;**

The **Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Region VIII,** a national government agency created under Executive Order No. 262 and reorganized under Republic Act No. 6975 responsible for promoting peace and order, ensuring public safety, and strengthening the capability of LGUs to effectively deliver basic services to the citizenry, with principal office at Tacloban City, Leyte, herein represented by its Regional Director, **DIR. ARNEL M. AGABE, CESO III;**

The **Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Region VIII**, a national government agency created under Executive Order No. 133 and strengthened by Republic Act No. 6977 responsible for promoting and facilitating the development of local and international trade and industry, empowering micro, small, and medium enterprises, and advancing consumer welfare, with principal office at Pawing, Palo, Leyte, herein represented by its Regional Director, **DR. CELERINA T. BATO;**

The **Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev) Region VIII**, formerly known as the National Economic and Development Authority and created through RA No. 12145, is the primary policy, planning, coordinating, and monitoring arm of the Executive Branch of government on the national economy, with principal office at Government Center, Palo, Leyte, herein represented by its Regional Director, **DIR. MEYLENE C. ROSALES;**

**Other Partners:**

The **BBCS Data Systems**, a key player in the regional IT and digital transformation space, brings technological expertise and innovation support critical to enabling startup scalability and ecosystem readiness in Eastern Visayas, with principal office at San Francisco Street, Catbalogan City, Samar, herein represented by its Chief Executive Officer, **ENGR. JOJO BALISACAN;**

The **Mare E Monte Restaurant**, local hospitality business and venue partner, supporting startup networking and visibility in the service sector with principal office at Rizal Avenue Extension, Catbalogan City, Samar, herein represented by its Chief Executive Officer, **MS. LOURDES TY SINGZON;**

The **Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Catbalogan City, Inc.**, a key representative of the private sector in Eastern Visayas, promoting trade, investment, and economic development in the City of Catbalogan and neighboring areas, with principal office at Catbalogan City, Samar, herein represented by its President, **MR. ARIEL D. DONCERAS;**

The **Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Tacloban-Leyte, Inc.**, a key representative of the private sector in Eastern Visayas, promoting trade, investment, and economic development in the City of Tacloban and neighboring areas, with principal office at Tacloban City, Leyte, herein represented by its President, **MR. EUGENE A. TAN;**

The Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Local Government Units (LGUs), National Government Agencies (NGAs), Industry Partners, and Entrepreneurs, hereinafter collectively referred to as the "**PARTIES**".

WITNESSETH:

***WHEREAS***, the establishment of the CONSORTIUM is anchored on innovative Startup Act (RA No. 11337), a legislation that aims to provide benefits and incentives to startup businesses in the Philippines to foster innovation and economic growth;

***WHEREAS***, the CONSORTIUM aims to catalyze inclusive innovation, support startup development, and strengthen regional collaboration across sectors in Eastern Visayas;

***WHEREAS***, CONSORTIUM envisions the creation of a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable startup ecosystem in Eastern Visayas by forging collaborations among academic institutions, government agencies, industries, and communities;

***WHEREAS***, the CONSORTIUM recognizes the importance of building a strong and inclusive startup ecosystem to foster economic development, innovation, and technological advancement, various partners in Eastern Visayas have come together to support this shared vision;

***WHEREAS***, the CONSORTIUM was initiated to unite government, academia, industry, and local government units (LGUs) in a collaborative effort to promote and sustain innovation-driven entrepreneurship across the region;

***WHEREAS***, the DOST VIII, DICT VIII, DILG VIII, DTI VIII, DEPDev VIII, together with esteemed higher education institutions including SSU, BiPSU, CCCC, ESSU, EVSU, LNU, NwSSU, PIT, SC, SLSU, SPSPS, SSCTI, UEP, UP Tacloban, and VSU have pledged their active participation and support;

***WHEREAS***, the DOST VIII plays a critical leadership role in advancing science, technology, and innovation through policy support, funding mobilization, and ecosystem coordination;

***WHEREAS***, the strategic participation of LGU Baybay City, LGU Calbayog City, LGU Catbalogan City, LGU Ormoc City, LGU Tacloban City, and Province of Samar ensures that innovation and entrepreneurship become key pillars in local governance and economic development planning;

***WHEREAS***, the CONSORTIUM is likewise strengthened by private sector partners including BBCS Data Systems, Mare e Monte Restaurant, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Catbalogan City Inc., and Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Tacloban-Leyte, Inc.;

***WHEREAS***, the PARTIES commit to share expertise, resources, facilities, and opportunities to advance the mission of USWAG Eastern Visayas and to work together

in designing, implementing, and sustaining initiatives that will empower startups, stimulate wealth creation, promote technology transfer, and accelerate inclusive regional growth;

***NOW THEREFORE***, for and in consideration of the foregoing premises, the PARTIES hereby agree to the following terms and conditions:

## I. OBJECTIVES OF USWAG

1.1. Foster and sustain a vibrant startup ecosystem in Eastern Visayas;
1.2. Strengthen collaboration among government, academe, industry, and entrepreneurs;
1.3. Implement programs that build startup capacity, innovation, and commercialization; and
1.4. Share resources, expertise, and networks for collective impact.

## II. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. The Consortium

2.1.1. Provide access to regional innovation programs, mentorship opportunities, funding windows, and capacity-building initiatives for HEIs;
2.1.2. Support LGUs in drafting and institutionalizing startup-friendly ordinances and local innovation councils;
2.1.3. Coordinate inter-institutional collaboration across HEIs and facilitate joint research, startup incubation, and technology transfer activities;
2.1.4. Lead the organization of regional forums, startup expos, and strategic planning meetings;
2.1.5. Maintain the USWAG Startup Portal for use by all members, showcasing HEI activities and startup projects; and
2.1.6. Provide updates, policy templates, and technical guidance to align HEIs with national innovation mandates (e.g., RA 11337 – Innovation Act, Philippine Startup Development Program).

2.2. Consortium Secretariat

2.2.1. Lead the establishment of 5 year regional startup development roadmap;
2.2.2. Assist the conduct of regional policy dialogues and development with USWAG member institutions;
2.2.3. Assist the conduct of regional events involving startups (tech transfer and innovation summit);
2.2.4. Training arm for retooling and advancement of TBI Managers and Personnel;
2.2.5. Lead in the improvement of brands and promotion of consortium members and startups; and
2.2.6. Lead the investors' education programs.

2.3. The Member HEIs

2.3.1. Integrate innovation into curricula;
2.3.2. Support research commercialization;
2.3.3. Provide mentors and facilities;

2.3.4. Designate a permanent focal person to represent the institution in consortium activities and serve as liaison to its internal innovation team;
2.3.5. Participate actively in regional events, capacity-building sessions, and co-design of programs (e.g., pitch competitions, startup bootcamps, IP clinics);
2.3.6. Host or co-host at least one consortium activity during the MOA period (e.g., meeting, training, forum);
2.3.7. Share relevant data on research outputs, startup initiatives, and success stories for inclusion in consortium reports;
2.3.8. Share resources to help sustain shared programs and services; and
2.3.9. Actively participate in programs, observe IP rights, and ethical practices.

2.4. The LGUs

2.4.1. Integrate innovation in development plans and mobilize resources;
2.4.2. Enact local ordinances and provide startup-friendly policies, infrastructure support, and co-financing for events or incubation hubs;
2.4.3. Help identify local innovators and host startup development initiatives;
2.4.4. Share resources to help sustain shared programs and services; and
2.4.5. Actively participate in programs, observe IP rights, and ethical practices.

2.5. NGAs

2.5.1. Offer funding opportunities, technical assistance, and training programs aligned with national innovation and startup policies;
2.5.2. Mobilize support for scale-up strategies and research utilization; and
2.5.3. Actively participate in programs, observe IP rights, and ethical practices.

2.6. Industry Partners

2.6.1. Provide mentorship, market linkages, and investment opportunities;
2.6.2. Provide internship and pilot testing opportunities, collaborate in product validation and market access, and invest in or procure from startup ventures; and
2.6.3. Actively participate in programs, observe IP rights, and ethical practices.

2.7. Other Stakeholders

2.7.1. Contribute industry mentorship or technical expertise, open internship or training opportunities for student startups, and provide optional in-kind support (venue, equipment, technical services); and
2.7.2. Actively participate in programs, observe IP rights, and ethical practices.

## III. GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

3.1. The Core Committee, composed of the Consortium Chairman, Consortium Secretariat, DEPDev, DICT, DTI, and PCCI shall be charged with the overall planning and execution of the programs, projects, and activities of the consortium; and
3.2. The SSU shall serve as the secretariat of the consortium.

## IV. TERMS OF AGREEMENT

4.1. This MOA shall be effective upon signing and shall remain valid for ten (10) years, renewable upon mutual agreement.

## V. GENERAL PROVISIONS

5.1. *Amendment:* This Agreement may only be amended in writing and by mutual consent among parties;

5.2. *Authority to Sign:* Each person signing this agreement represents and warrants that he/she is duly authorized to sign this agreement. In the unlikely event that the person signing for the other party is not authorized to do so, the latter agrees to hold the other party/ies harmless for any cause or consequence of the absence/lack of authority to sign;

5.3. *Arbitration:* All disputes arising between and among the parties as to interpretation, operation or effect of any clause in the Agreement or any other difference between the parties shall first be resolved amicably. In case of failure, the Rules on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) between national government agencies under Republic Act No. 9285 shall apply;

5.4. *Indemnification:* Each party shall indemnify, hold free and harmless, and defend at its own expense the other party/ies from and against all suits, claims, demands, and liabilities of any nature or kind, arising out of acts or omissions of the former, in the performance of any activity in connection with the program, including those that may be initiated by its employees, workers, agents, subcontractors, or by any other entity or persons against said party by reason of or in connection to the program;

5.5. *Venue:* The parties further agree that in case of legal action requiring court litigations that may arise in the enforcement of this Agreement, the venue of court litigation shall be in Tacloban City, Leyte only; and

5.6. *Separability Clause:* If any part or provision of this Agreement is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in force and in effect.

## VI. TERMINATION

6.1. Either party may terminate this agreement upon 30 days' written notice, subject to settlement of any outstanding obligations.

**IN CONSIDERATION** of the mutual covenant set forth above, witness our signatures this 06 day of May, 2025, at Tacloban City, Philippines.

For Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Region VIII:

**JOHN GLENN D. OCAÑA**
Regional Director

For Samar State University (SSU):

**REDENTOR S. PALENCIA**
University President

For Biliran Province State University (BiPSU):

**VICTOR C. CAÑEZO JR.**
University President

For Catbalogan City Community College (CCCC):

**DEXTER M. UY**
Chairman of the board

For Eastern Samar State University (ESSU):

**ANDRES C. PAGATPATAN JR.**
University President

For Eastern Visayas State University (EVSU):

**DENNIS C. DE PAZ**
University President

For Leyte Normal University (LNU):

**JONAS P. VILLAS**
OIC-University President

For Northwest Samar State University (NwSSU):

**BENJAMIN L. PECAYO**
University President

For Palompon Institute of Technology (PIT):

**DENNIS ANOTA M. DEL PILAR**
College President

For Samar Colleges, Inc. (SC):

FOR:

**RHETT CAEZAR L. PICZON**
College President

For Southern Leyte State University (SLSU):

**JUDE A. DUARTE**
University President

For St. Paul School of Professional Studies (SPSPS):

**ERWIN VINCENT G. ALCALA**
School President

For St. Scholastica's College Tacloban Inc. (SSCTI):

**SR. M. ROSARIO R. OBINIANA**
School President

For University of Eastern Philippines (UEP):

**CHERRY I. ULTRA**
University President

For University of the Philippines Tacloban College (UP Tacloban):

**PATRICIA B. ARINTO**
Campus Dean

For Visayas State University (VSU):

**PROSE IVY G. YEPES**
University President

For Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) Region VIII:

**MELVIN CARLO T. BARROA**
OIC-Regional Director

For Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Region VIII:

**ARNEL M. AGABE**
Regional Director

For Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Region VIII:

**CELERINA T. BATO**
Regional Director

For Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev) Region VIII:

**MEYLENE C. ROSALES**
Regional Director

For Local Government Unit of Baybay City, Leyte:

**HON. JOSE CARLOS L. CARI**
City Mayor

For Local Government Unit of Calbayog City, Samar:

**HON. RAYMUND C. UY**
City Mayor

For Local Government Unit of Catbalogan City, Samar:

**HON. DEXTER M. UY**
City Mayor

For Local Government Unit of Ormoc City, Leyte:

**HON. LUCY TORRES-GOMEZ**
City Mayor

For Local Government Unit of Tacloban City, Leyte:

**HON. ALFRED S. ROMUALDEZ**
City Mayor

For Local Government Unit of Province of Samar:

**HON. SHAREE ANN T. TAN**
Governor

For Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Catbalogan City, Samar:

**ARIEL D. DONCERAS**
President

For Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Tacloban-Leyte, Inc.:

**EUGENE A. TAN**
President

For BBCS Data Systems:

**JOSEPH G. BALISACAN**
CEO/Business Owner

For Mare E Monte Restaurant:

**LOURDES TY SINGZON**
CEO/Business Owner

***WITNESSES:***

**VIVIAN L. MOYA**
Project Leader, ReSEED/USWAG

**FLORENTINO L. QUIÑONES JR.**
Science Research Specialist II, DOST VIII

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }**
**CITY OF CATBALOGAN } S.S.**

BEFORE ME, A Notary Public for and in the City of _____ this _____ day of _____ personally appeared:

| | Government Issued Identification | Date (DD-MM-YYYY) /Place Issued |
|---|---|---|
| **DR. JOHN GLENN D. OCAÑA** | | |
| **DR. REDENTOR S. PALENCIA** | | |
| **DR. VIVIAN L. MOYA** | | |

Known to me as the same persons who executed the foregoing Memorandum of Agreement and they acknowledged to me that the same is their free and voluntary act and deed and that of the entities they respectively represent.

This instrument, consisting of **twelve (12)** pages, including this page whereon this Acknowledgment is written, are signed by the parties together with their instrumental witnesses on each and every page thereof.

TO THE TRUTH OF FOREGOING, witness now my hand and seal on the date and place first above written.

Doc. No. _____
Page No. _____
Book No. _____
Series of _____