



Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION



MEMORANDUM FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CHAIRPERSON

FOR : **ALL CHED CENTRAL AND REGIONAL OFFICE DIRECTORS
ALL PRESIDENTS / HEADS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIs)**

SUBJECT : **PARTICIPATION IN THE 20TH NATIONAL BIOTECHNOLOGY
WEEK HOSTED BY CHED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES LOS BAÑOS**

DATE : **26 SEPTEMBER 2024**

All public and private higher education institutions, faculty, and students are enjoined to participate in the **20th National Biotechnology Week (NBW) Celebration to be held at the University of the Philippines Los Baños on November 25-29, 2024** under the theme “*#experienceBIOTECH: Expand the Future of Biotechnology through Education, Innovation, and Commercialization.*” The celebration is in line with the pertinent provisions of Republic Act (R.A.) No. 7722, otherwise known as the “Higher Education Act of 1994” and Presidential Proclamation No. 1414 series of 2007.

As the host of this year’s celebration, the CHED highlights *education, innovation, and commercialization* - the common grounds of collaboration among the academe, government, and industry in biotechnology. Activities related to higher education, collaboration, and experiential learning are showcased to stir awareness and enhance understanding of biotechnology’s target stakeholders. Various events are prepared by the eight government agencies comprising the NBW Steering Committee, in collaboration with academic and industry partners.

The general public is welcome to participate and may pre-register online. Further information on the schedule of activities and pre-registration may be found in the enclosed primer while updates and announcements will be posted through the **official NBW Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/nbwphilippines>**.

Participation of officials, employees, and students from private higher education institutions shall be **VOLUNTARY**. On the other hand, officials, employees, and students of State and Local Universities and Colleges (SUCs and LUCs) who will participate in this activity shall obtain prior approval from the President / Head of their respective institutions and are hereby reminded to observe proper use of government funds in accordance with prevailing government rules and regulations.

For questions and concerns, contact the UPLB NBW Secretariat at nbw.uplb@gmail.com.

Wide dissemination of this memorandum is desired.

Signed

J. PROSPERO E. DE VERA III, DPA
Chairperson



NATIONAL BIOTECHNOLOGY WEEK 2024 PRIMER

I. Rationale / Background

Biotechnology is a recognized tool in attaining sustainable development, considering current and emerging societal challenges. Through intellectual property and technology transfer, the field has been identified to aid in boosting production or reducing costs in industries (Bradley, et al., 2013).

The Philippines celebrates this transformative discipline through the National Biotechnology Week (NBW) as per **Presidential Proclamation No. 1414 s. 2007**, which aims to “*promote safe and responsible use of modern biotechnology and its products as one of the several means to achieve and sustain food security, equitable access to health services, sustainable and safe environment, and industry development*”. As per this Proclamation, the NBW is held every last week of November and is spearheaded by the Interagency Steering Committee composed of the Secretaries of the eight Departments namely Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), and Commission on Higher Education (CHED). For this year, the event proper is on 25-29 November 2024.

Crucial to fostering a thriving innovation ecosystem for biotechnology in the country are the triple helix actors: the academe, government, and industry. This year’s theme will highlight the common grounds of collaboration among these sectors that will propel the future of biotechnology in the country: innovation, education, and commercialization.

With CHED at the helm of this year’s NBW, activities related to higher education, collaboration, and experiential learning will be the major strategies employed to stir awareness and enhance understanding of biotechnology’s target stakeholders.

The week-long celebration will be held at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) which is home to Centers of Excellence in Research that are relevant to biotechnology including the Institute of Plant Breeding, National Crop Protection Center, and National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology

which has been dubbed as the first of its kind in the Philippines and in Southeast Asia, and established through the initiative of former President Ferdinand Marcos, Sr.

II. Goals and Objectives

The National Biotechnology Week is a dynamic event designed to showcase the remarkable advancements and potentials of biotechnology research and related initiatives in the country. Its goals are to:

- A. Increase public awareness and understanding of the principles, applications, and potentials of biotechnology;
- B. Showcase innovations and knowledge outputs developed through biotechnology that contribute to addressing societal challenges, improving human health, enhancing agricultural productivity, and mitigating environmental impact; and
- C. Foster collaboration, engagement, and partnerships between the academe, government, industry, and civil society.

III. Theme

For this year's NBW, the following proposed theme emphasizes three key areas namely, education, innovation, and commercialization, for the advancement of biotechnology.

"#experienceBIOTECH: Expand the Future of Biotechnology through Education, Innovation, and Commercialization"

Education highlights the importance of instruction and information among the general public and the future generation in the field of biotechnology. This involves raising awareness, teaching young learners about the potential benefits, challenges, applications, and ethical considerations of the field, or even adopting lifelong learning activities. Through education, we can equip the youth with a strong foundation of appreciation and understanding for biotechnology.

Innovation highlights the role and importance of continuous research and development in biotechnology. By bringing relevant groups together to collaborate and share knowledge, we can accelerate the development of innovative biotechnology solutions and foster a spirit of creativity in tackling problems.

Biotechnology holds potential to improve our lives in areas, such as food, healthcare, the environment, and agriculture. Through *commercialization*, we can unlock this potential by transforming scientific discoveries into practical applications that can benefit our society.

IV. Activities

A. Biotechnology Knowledge-Sharing Activities

To foster inclusiveness of the NBW 2024 celebration among college students, UPLB student organizations will also hold various discussions as part of the build-up activities and during the NBW proper in the last week of November. These activities will be national in scope as the student organizations will invite schools and other key stakeholders from all over the country to participate.

1. Environmental Biotechnology (18 November 2024)

Theme	COFFEEKOLOHIYA: B2B: Biodiversity to Biotechnology
Organizer	UP Ecology and Systematics Major Students Society (ECOSS)
Venue	Makiling Botanic Gardens, UPLB
Objective	To showcase biotechnologies derived from the Philippines' rich biodiversity through a coffee-table discussion.
Target Audience	Students, researchers, and advocates nationwide
Contact Information	Ms. Ashley Valdez - Project Head up.ecosystemss2009@gmail.com

2. Animal Biotechnology (20 November 2024)

Theme	BIOTECH TO THE RESCUE:: Feathered Futures and Herds of Hope: The Philippine Animal Industry Reimagined with Biotech
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Organizer	UP League of Agricultural Biotechnology Students (UP LABS)
Venue	REDREC Auditorium, UPLB
Objective	To discuss the current challenges of the Philippine animal industry and the potential of animal biotechnology in the advancement of the industry and in addressing food security.
Target Audience	Students, researchers, and faculty members nationwide
Contact Information	Ma. Zielo B. Dalusag - Project Head 0956-664-9890 / uplabs.uplb@gmail.com

3. **Food and Health Biotechnology (22 November 2024)**

Theme	Genetics as the Fuel for Advancing Food and Health Biotechnology Frontiers
Organizer	The UPLB Genetics Society
Venue	REDREC Auditorium, UPLB
Objective	To present the latest trends in food and health biotechnology focusing on the importance of genetics in the said field
Target Audience	Students, researchers, and faculty members nationwide
Contact Information	theuplbgeneticsociety@gmail.com

B. **#experienceBIOTECH Celebration**

The NBW 2024 *#experienceBIOTECH* will serve as the main event of the celebration. It will involve a week-long exhibit, panel discussions, inter-high school and inter-collegiate competitions, and biotechnology fiesta that will let participants experience the best in biotechnology education, innovation, and commercialization.

1. Exhibits and Panel Discussions

As part of the #CHEDlebration, a week-long exhibit will be held to showcase biotechnology in agriculture, veterinary medicine, and environmental science, among others. Each exhibit booth will feature interactive and experiential activities catered to students to make them appreciate and inspire them of the huge potential of biotechnology in the future.

Sixty (60) exhibitors from academic institutions, research centers, industry players, and government units from all over the Philippines will be invited to participate in this exhibition.

A series of activities revolving around the discussions on biotechnology will occur in concurrence with the exhibit. These will be organized by various government agencies or HEIs.

To attend these exhibitions and discussions, kindly coordinate with nbw.uplb@gmail.com.

2. Biotechnology Fiesta (25-29 November 2024)

The Biotechnology Fiesta aims to immerse the participants in cutting-edge research and development facilities of various UPLB research and development units located within the University's S&T Park. It is an interactive guided tour that features the University's innovative works in the fields of biotechnology and agriculture. The following units will be included in the tour:

- 1. Technology Transfer and Business Development Office (TTBDO)**
- 2. National Crop Protection Center (NCPC)**
- 3. National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (BIOTECH);**
- 4. Organic Agriculture Research, Development, and Extension Center (OARDEC)**
- 5. Institute of Plant Breeding (IPB)**

To attend the Biotechnology Fiesta, kindly coordinate with nbw.uplb@gmail.com.

3. Inter-Collegiate Competitions

Organizer	The UPLB Genetics Society (GeneSoc)
Venue	UPLB
Objective	To enhance appreciation in genetics and biotechnology through a national quiz contest and other targeted interactive activities.
Target Participants	College students (HEIs)
Target Partners	theuplbgeneticsociety@gmail.com

4. Inter-High School Competitions

Organizer	UP Genetic Researchers and Agricultural Innovators Society (UP GRAINS) & UP League of Agricultural Biotechnology Students (UP LABS)
Venue	UPLB
Objective	To enhance understanding of biotechnology through academic and non-academic competitions such as quiz contest, research presentations, essay writing, poster making, among others
Target Participants	Senior high school (SHS) students
Contact Information	nbw2024.interhscompetitions@gmail.com