



science and innovation

Department:
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An African perspective on Science Diplomacy: Footprint of the African Academy of Sciences

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Introduction

- The African Academy of Sciences (AAS) is a Pan-African not-for-profit Organization that covers all the 55 Member States of the African Union.
- Regionally, the AAS is the biggest continental Academy in the world.
- It recognizes all knowledge domains/disciplines, from Natural Sciences, Humanities, Health, Social Sciences, Agricultural and Nutritional Sciences, to Policy Science, etc., etc.
- It is a continental think tank that offers Science Advice, as well as Science Policy to the AU through the Office of the Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation at the AUC.
- The AAS therefore has a huge convening power.

Science Diplomacy Footprint of the AAS

- The Governing Council, at its meeting on the 27th June 2022, resolved to set up regional offices of the African Academy of Sciences in Asia, Europe, and North America.
- With the assistance of the Chinese Embassy in Pretoria and AAS Fellows in China, the China Centre for International Science and Technology Exchange has agreed to provide AAS with the Asia Regional Office in Beijing.
- In Europe, Edinburgh is keen to host the Regional Office of the AAS, with the assistance of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.



Science Diplomacy Footprint of the AAS

Outside Africa, the AAS is working closely with a number of Academies in the world, which include:

- the US National Academy of Sciences
- the Chinese Academy of Sciences
- the Chinese Academy of Engineering
- the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences
- the Royal Society (UK)
- the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and
- the US National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine



Science Diplomacy Footprint of the AAS

MOUs signed between the AAS and Universities include:

- University of Edinburgh
- Jinghua University, Beijing
- China Agricultural University, Beijing
- Hebei Agricultural University
- Hebei University
- Nanjing Tech University



Science Diplomacy Footprint of the AAS

ULTIMATE AIM OF THE AAS/CHINA PARTNERSHIP:

Establishment of a China/Africa Agricultural Science, Technology and Innovation Alliance (CAASTIA)

An initiative of the AAS and CAAS involving:

- Agricultural Universities in Africa and China
- Agricultural Research Councils/Institutes in Africa and China
- Agri-business and Agri-entrepreneurs in Africa and China, including Women and Youth groups



Science Diplomacy Footprint of the AAS

The AAS/Edinburgh Partnership

- The AAS/Royal Society of Edinburgh MOU – to assist in increasing Women and Social Scientists elected into the AAS. The RSE is best at both!
- The AAS/UoE MOU - established a Visiting Fellowships programme targeting the AAS Affiliates
- Future AAS/UoE meeting in Nairobi, **May 2023**:
 - What can Edinburgh do to support research/teaching in Africa?
 - Focus on early career researchers?
 - Fellowship programmes, and scholarships?



Science Diplomacy Footprint of the AAS

The African Academy of Sciences/US National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) Partnership:

- The AAS/NASEM partnership organized the **First US-Africa Frontiers of Science, Engineering, and Medicine Symposium**, 12-14 October 2022, in Nairobi.
- Received over 900 Applications, but only 50 early career scientists from USA and 50 from Africa were selected to attend the Symposium.
- The disciplinary fields covered in the First Symposium included:

Artificial Intelligence

Biodiversity

Climate and Food Security

Infectious Diseases

Materials Science

The First Symposium was so successful that funders agreed to finance the Second Symposium in 2023 in another AU Region.



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PRESS RELEASE

The EU/AU/AAS Partnership

44 rising researchers in 38 African countries win ARISE Fellowships worth up to €500,000 per grant for 5 years

AAS partners with the European Union and the African Union to boost Africa's science economy by investing in early career researchers.

Nairobi, Kenya | Wednesday 15 June 2022



Science Diplomacy Footprint of the AAS

- **Competitive Grant Application to Inter-Academy Partnerships**
- **Deadline: 15 October 2021**
- **Title of Project: Seeking Solutions to Address Transboundary Water Dispute over the Nile Basin through Science Diplomacy**
- **Academies involved:**
 - the African Academy of Sciences (AAS)
 - the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences (EAS)
 - the Sudanese National Academy of Sciences (SNAS)
 - the Egyptian Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT), and
 - the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC)
- **The Grant Application was unsuccessful.**



Science Diplomacy Footprint of the AAS

- **AAS/Frontiers Foundation Partnership**
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- Obtained \$40K funding from Frontiers Foundation for a scientific Symposium to address the multi-uses of the Nile River by Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia, and conduct modelling studies to ascertain the negative effects of the Renaissance Dam on water outflow, if any.

Science Diplomacy Footprint of the AAS

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Billions of locusts swarm through East Africa to Southern Africa, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh after years of extreme weather. Big projects like this one require significant multilateral funding for research.



A man chases away a swarm of desert locusts in the bush near Enziu, Kitui County, some 200km east of the capital Nairobi, Kenya. DAI KUROKAWA/EPA



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Academy of Sciences**

Conclusion

Science Diplomacy is the route to go if we are to resolve complex problems, and/or undertake big global projects for societal development.



Dankie
Enkosi
Ha khensa
Re a leboga
Ro livhuwa
Siyabonga
Siyathokoza
Thank you