

Conference

Research and Innovation in Africa: a driver for development and partnerships

13 September 2023

Permanent Representation of France to the EU, Place de Louvain 14, 1000 Bruxelles

Research and Innovation are important levers to strengthening sustainable partnerships with partner countries. Indeed, scientific collaborations are key to develop appropriate answers to global challenges - such as climate change or the emergence of new pathogens - by strengthening research capacities of partner countries. The Global Gateway strategy or the Global approach in the field of R&I offer a renewed political framework based on reciprocity, shared interests and targeted investments. Several initiatives have been launched to set up scientific partnerships while regional dialogues are also pursued to identify research themes of common interest. A roadmap for research and innovation between the European Union and the African Union was agreed at the occasion of the EU-AU Summit in February 2022. It identifies 4 objectives: translate innovative capacities and achievements into tangible outputs, strengthen innovation ecosystems, develop sustainable, long lasting and mutually beneficial higher education and R&I and scale up instruments that can take forward existing successful programmes and projects.

In the context of the revision of the EU multiannual financial framework and of the programming of EU external action instruments for 25-27, the conference will discuss the role of research and innovation for the development of partnerships between the European Union and partner countries, through a focus on African countries.

Aims of the conference

- Through a focus on the EU-African scientific partnerships, brainstorming on the implementation of Research & Innovation policies in support to the Global Gateway strategy;
- Give visibility to European Research & Innovation expertise in the field of partnerships for development;
- Promote the dialogue between European research organisations and the European Commission on EU Research & Innovation policies and funding mechanisms in the Global Gateway context;
- Mobilize European research organizations in the implementation of the Global Gateway strategy;
- Provide a political framework for the creation of a European Research Alliance for Sustainable Development in partner countries in the Global South;



Draft programme

9:00 – 9:30	Welcome coffee and Registration
9:30 – 9:45	Opening speech <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Cyril Piquemal, Deputy Permanent Representative
9:45 – 10:30	Keynote speeches – The role of Research and Innovation in the European Union – African Union partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hans Stausboll, Director for Africa, DG INTPA • Patrick Nedellec, Director for European and International cooperation, French Ministry of Higher Education and Research • Erik Hansalek, Head of Unit Africa, German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
10:30 – 11:30	Round Table 1: The singularities of the Research & Innovation partnerships for development <p><i>Objectives:</i> Through the example of Africa, the round table will allow research organizations to explain the needs and specificities of the R&I for development. The testimonials should address the following topics in particular: research infrastructures, issues related to HR/training/mobility, the notion of scientific excellence in research with the South and the construction of sustainable partnerships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olusola Bandele Oyewole, General Director, Association of African Universities • Amadou Sall, General Director, Institut Pasteur de Dakar, President of Pasteur Network • Stephen Onakuse, President, Alliance Agrinatura • Emilian Cioc, Deputy regional director, Agence universitaire de la francophonie <p><i>Moderation:</i> Michael Hörig, Director of Brussels' Office, DAAD</p>

11:30 – 12:30	<p>Round Table 2: The European R&I policy framework to support the partnerships for development</p> <p><i>Objectives:</i> The presentation of the European R&I policy framework will give the opportunity to compare it with the needs and specificities that have been expressed during the first round table. DG INTPA will present in particular the role of R&I in the Global Gateway strategy, while DG RTD will detail the Global approach of R&I with a focus on Africa (e.g.: EU-AU roadmap/Africa initiative Horizon Europe). The presentations of the two DGs should also address the issues of synergies between programmes. The presentations of a Member State and a National Funding Agency will highlight their ownership of the political framework and, in particular, the added value of the so called “Team Europe” approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carla Montesi, Director, Green Deal and Digital Agenda, DG INTPA (<i>tbc</i>) • Nienke Buisman, Head of Unit, International Cooperation, DG RTD • Thomas Melonio, Director Innovation, Strategy, Research, Agence française pour le développement (AFD) • Isabel Diaz, Deputy Vice President of the Spanish Research Council (CSIC) <p><i>Moderation:</i> Alain Mermet, Permanent Representative to the EU, CNRS</p>
12 : 30 – 14 : 00	<p>Networking Lunch</p>
14 : 00 – 15 : 00	<p>Round Table 3: Tools and resources available</p> <p><i>Objectives:</i> The last round table will discuss the operational aspects of certain R&I instruments set up by the European Commission to support partnerships with African countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olivier Sagna, Director for Studies & Cooperation, Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Senegal • Helena Posthumus, Programme Director DeSRIA-Lift, Wageningen University – DeSIRA • Ibrahim Karidio Diori, Centre de Recherche Médicale et Sanitaire, Niger – ARISE • Fluvio Franchi, Project Coordinator, Pan African Planetary and Space Science Network <p><i>Moderation:</i> Olivier Dangles, Deputy Science Director, IRD</p>
15 : 00 – 15 : 15	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valérie Verdier, CEO, IRD