



Concept note

AU-EU High Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) – virtual Plenary meeting on science, technology and innovation

27 January 2022

Special focus on a joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda

Introduction

The 1st R&I Ministerial of the AU-EU High-Level Policy Dialogue on Science, Technology and Innovation (HLPD on STI) in 2020, agreed on the enormous growth potential of the innovation ecosystems in the EU and the AU. It highlighted that more could be done to generate impact on the ground from the research jointly invested in, through improving innovation performance and capacities across both sides.

In the meeting, Ministers also agreed to start developing a joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda and to focus the cooperation on four priority areas: Public Health, Green Transition, Innovation & Technology, and Capacities for Science.

For this purpose, the collaboration under the joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda needs to occur hand in hand among the African Union, the European Union, their Member States, the private sectors and industries and should aim to build on the demographic dividend in empowering especially the youth, which, through entrepreneurship, is increasingly promoting and implementing radical innovations.

Overall objective of the HLPD virtual Plenary on 27 January 2022

Based on a thorough needs and gaps analysis, this joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda proposes specific objectives and related short-, medium- to long-term actions for all four HLPD priority areas. The HLPD Senior Officials are now invited to discuss the current working version and to agree on the next steps for the joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda and to discuss ways of implementation.

The engagement and agreement on next steps of the HLPD Senior Officials is an important step towards acknowledging the work on the Innovation at the 6th AU-EU Summit 2022.

Background

History of the AU-EU High Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation: adopted at the 2nd Africa-EU Summit in Tripoli in 2010 as an important element of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES). The dialogue serves as a platform for regular exchanges on research and innovation policy and aims to formulate and implement long-term priorities to strengthen Africa-Europe cooperation on science, technology and innovation. The dialogue is co-chaired by the European Union (European Commission, DG Research and Innovation) and the African Union (Member State holding the chair of the AU Specialised Technical Committee on Education, Science and Technology) and brings together the S&T representatives from the 27 EU Member States and the 55 AU Member States. More information on:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/europe-world/international-cooperation/eu-africa-cooperation_en or <https://au.int/sw/node/26690>

Joint EU-AU Innovation Agenda:

Implementation of the Agenda is expected to build on previous and ongoing R&I activities and additional financing needs for the proposed actions could be covered by the biennial work programmes of Horizon Europe, regional and national multi-annual indicative programmes of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe, and by the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+). Furthermore, several EU Member States have shown an interest to increase their support to AU-EU STI cooperation in African countries and contribute in a Team Europe approach. The same holds for several AU Member States and private sector.