

The Launch of the African Academy of Science's Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027

Date: 29 February 2024

13:00 – 14:00 hrs EAT (GMT +3)

Mode: Virtual

Concept Note

1 Background information on the AAS 2023 – 2027 Strategic Plan

The African Academy of Sciences (AAS) is an independent, non-aligned; pan-African and Africa-led organisation and strives to drive sustainable development in Africa through science technology and innovation (STI) since 1985. AAS has tripartite mandate of recognising excellence through the AAS' highly prestigious fellowship and award schemes; providing advisory and think tank functions for shaping Africa's Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) strategies and policies; and implementing key STI programmes that impact on Africa's developmental prospects.

The Academy, as the continent voice for science, has implemented groundbreaking scientific research and innovation in strategic partnerships on the African continent and globally. These programmes seek to advance science for the Sustainable Development Goals, the African Union Agenda 2063, the 'Africa we want', and the broad African continental science policy priorities occasioned by Science Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA 2024). These include research programmes that tackle challenges of global pandemics, public health, food and water security, climate change (including the impact of global warming and the biodiversity crisis) and acquiring a visionary global perspective. For nearly 40 years, the AAS has advanced science in Africa through growing world class scientific competencies and infrastructure across the continent.

With lessons learned and opportunities in science for transforming lives, the AAS Strategic Plan (2023–2027) is anchored on the vision, renewed mission, and core values of AAS. The **vision** is *Transformed lives through science* while the renewed **mission is** to *Leverage on Science, Technology, and Innovation for sustainable development*. AAS's values that will guide the Secretariat, the Governing Council, Fellows, and Partners in implementing the mission to attain the vision are *integrity, diversity, excellence, empathy, and collaboration through fairness*. The Strategic Plan (2023–2027) is centred around three broad operational themes stated as follows:

People – providing an enabling environment for learning and growth.

Partnerships – key focus on nurturing strategic partnerships.

Excellence – supporting *the best people, places, and programmes* to undertake relevant research.

The roadmap adopted by AAS in this strategic plan is clearly outlined to monitor progress and assess impact. Successful implementation of the plan will enable AAS to assert its pan-African leadership ‘think thank’ advisory role in science and being a major player in scientific research for sustainable development. As a matter of priority, the focus will be on emerging global disruptions, Africa’s articulated development priorities, and socio-economic development needs. This will be based on five focus areas, which are summarised as follows:

1. Policy and governance
2. Natural sciences
3. Environmental and climate change
4. Health and wellbeing
5. Social sciences and humanities.

The AAS will continue to strengthen existing strategic partnerships, supported by global funders while diversifying its funding base to include African and international governments, academies, philanthropists, private sector, development funding institutions and multilateral agencies, high net worth individuals, family and foundations of repute. Along these, the AAS plans to marshal its community of 1000+ Fellows and Affiliates, and multi-stakeholders to support the continent’s efforts at pivoting towards a science-led development on the continent.

We invite you to join us on this road to implement the new strategy for the Africa we want. AAS invites you to the online launch of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan on 29 February 2024. The launch will be preceded by a round table of eminent scientists and friends of Africa to present the status of science in Africa addressing policy, practice and prospects needed to leapfrog in science for transforming lives on the continent.

2 Agenda for the virtual Launch (13:00 – 14:00hrs EAT)

Time (GMT + 3)	Activities
13.00– 13.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and background: <i>Prof. Lise Korsten, President, AAS (5 mins)</i> • Presentation and Overview of Strategic Plan: <i>Dr. Peggy Oti-Boateng, Executive Director, AAS (10 mins)</i> • Remarks by a GC Member <i>Prof. Kenneth Ozoemena, VP Southern Africa Reion (5 mins)</i>
13.20– 13.50	<p>Round table on:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AAS and the Advancement of Science in Africa: Policy, Practice and Prospects</p> <p>Moderator, <i>Prof. Lise Korsten, President, AAS</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Mohamed Belhocine, Commissioner for ESTI, AU – <i>Talk on AESA, AU Agenda 2063, STISA 2034 and the AU C10 for Education, Science and Technology.</i> • Dr. Lidia Brito, Assistant General Director, UNESCO – <i>Give an overview of UNESCO work in science, and the collaboration opportunities for UNESCO and AAS on advancing Agenda 2063 within the context of the Africa we want.</i> • Dr. Peter Gluckman, President, International Science Council –ISC and AAS partnership towards accelerating science for sustainability in Africa. • Dr. Phil Mphathi Mjwara, Director General, Department of Science and Technology, South Africa – <i>Expound on how AAS strategy links with the implementation and operationalisation of WSF 2022 and beyond.</i> <p>Official launch of the AAS Strategic Plan 2023-2027 by Prof. Lisa Korsten, President of AAS</p>
13:50 – 14:00	<p>Closing remarks: <i>Prof. Friday Okonofua, Secretary General AAS (10 mins)</i></p>
	<p>Short Messages by Partners and Stakeholders (Science Practitioners) from all continents will be shared on all media platforms.</p>

Conclusion

The prospects and opportunities in science for sustainable development is huge. However, we need to develop the landscape to anchor science at multiple and transdisciplinary and agile levels to make it work for Africa's industrial environmental and socio-economic development. The Africa Academy of Sciences cannot do this alone, so we invite all to join us in making science work for the Africa we want.