



AU – EU Innovation Festival

15 June 2023 - Cape Town, South Africa

Introduction

Hosted by the European Union, the African Union and the Republic of South Africa, the **AU-EU Innovation Festival** aims to build on the success of the [AU-EU Innovation Agenda Stakeholder Event](#) of Nairobi, November 2022, and particularly of its “AU-EU Innovation Fair – Meet the innovators”. This Festival will run as a large hybrid, whole day-event and will bring together innovators’ insights and perspectives on the AU-EU Innovation Agenda, including from those who attended Nairobi’s event, and feature pitching sessions and exhibitions of innovations from both Africa and Europe. The Festival is expected to host ~500 participants on-site and online.

The first edition of this Festival will occur in the backdrop of the process of adoption of the AU-EU Innovation Agenda aims therefore to gather views and aspirations on the imminent implementation phase of this Agenda and of its short-term actions (foreseen to run within the first three years from the adoption, therefore from June 2023 till June 2026).

It is therefore expected that the second edition of this Festival will take place at the end of the year 2026 to take stock on the implementation of the short-term actions of the Agenda, looking forward towards the medium- and long-term phase.

In the morning, the Festival will include (1) a high-level opening, followed by (2) two parallel agora discussions on success stories and bottlenecks on the pathway to scale up of women- and youth-led innovations and (3) will then feature the final pitching event of the “Open Innovation Challenges” of the Horizon 2020-project “ENRICH in Africa”, leading to an award ceremony attended by the corporate sponsors of this competition (this to take place in the evening). Selections of the winners (one per challenge) will be made a specific jury consisting of corporations’ representatives (with one corporation assigned to each priority area) who, in the case of four specific challenges (i.e. two in Public Health, one in Innovation and Technology, and one in Green Transition), will be supported also by the ENRICH in Africa project consortium/coordination team.

In the afternoon, the Festival will include (1) pitching of innovators and incubators selected through an “expression of interest” process, to be followed by (2) an AU-EU Innovation Fair, with exhibitions of projects’ roll-ups, booths and real-life demonstrations, to foster partnerships among innovators and among entrepreneurs and potential investors.

The organisation of the AU-EU Innovation Festival is managed by a “Coordination Team”, working in close collaboration with a Global Service Facility contracted on behalf of the



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European Commission. The “Coordination Team” will include staff from the European Commission, DG Research & Innovation; (ii) EU Delegation to South Africa; (iii) South Africa’s Department of Science and Innovation; (iv) the African Union Commission; and (v) the “ENRICH in Africa” project coordination team. The Coordination Team will report to the “Ad-hoc Innovation Agenda Working Group of the Bureau of the AU-EU High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation”.

High-level overview of the programme

Timeslot	Key moment of the Festival	Moderation	Location
7:30 – 8:45 am	Participants check-in & welcome coffee (on-site)		
9:00 – 9:45 am	Welcome and Opening Address by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Maria Cristina Russo (European Commission’s Director Global Approach & International Cooperation) • Mr Daan Du Toit (Deputy Director-General: International Cooperation and Resources, South Africa’s Department of Science and Innovation) 	Ms Nienke Buisman (European Commission) & Dr Monica Ebele Idinoba (African Union Commission)	HALL 10
	ENRICH in Africa promotional video		
	Keynote addresses by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Dr Nzimande, South Africa’s Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation (<i>online</i>) • H.E. Ms Sandra Kramer, EU Ambassador to South Africa • H.E. Prof Mohamed Belhocine, African Union Commissioner (<i>recorded video message</i>) • Prof Aggrey Ambali, AUDA-NEPAD, Senior Advisor – Office of Science, Technology and Innovation 		



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<p>9:45 – 10:20 am</p>	<p>Interactive Overview of the AU-EU Innovation Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Lukovi Seke, AUDA-NEPAD • Dr Vincenzo Lorusso, European Commission 	<p>Ms Nienke Buisman (European Commission) & Dr Monica Ebele Idinoba (African Union Commission)</p>	<p>HALL 10</p>
<p>10:20 – 10:45 am</p>	<p>Coffee Break</p>		<p>HALL 8</p>
<p>10:45 am – 12:00 pm</p>	<p>Two parallel Agora Sessions: “Sharing successes & tackling bottlenecks on the way to impact” with special focus on:</p> <p>Youth-led innovations Opened by Ms Maria Cristina Russo (European Commission)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Thato Kasongo, Mohiri by Angular Creative Labs part of Botswana Innovation Hub (Botswana) • Dr Sabina Maglio, Umbilical cord and placenta simulator developed by Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna (Italy) • Mr Dimma Mawejje Muhammed, Mawejje Creations part of Youth Start-Up Academy Uganda by Hive Colab (Uganda) • Mr Kelvin Chikezie, Dexude Oy and part of the Finland chapter of Startup Grind (Finland) • Mr Golden Nhunhama, CropFix by eAgro and part of Land Accelerator (Zimbabwe) 	<p>Ms Nienke Buisman (European Commission) & Mahlet Teshome (African Union Commission)</p>	<p>HALL 10</p>



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	<p>Women-led innovations, Opened by Ms Vinny Pillay (South Africa’s Department of Science and Innovation) Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Mélanie Keïta Mariam, Melanin Kapital (France/Mali/Kenya) • Dr Esther Kanduma (University of Nairobi, Kenya) and Dr Funmilayo I. D. Afolayan (University of Ibadan, Nigeria), International Veterinary Vaccinology Network African Schools Outreach Program (IVVN-ASOP) • Dr Okito Wedi, Ctrve Development (South Africa) • Dr Irith De Baetselier, Collect2Know (C2K), Institute of Tropical Medicine (Belgium) • Dr Thilona Arumugam, L’Oréal-UNESCO Women in Science Laureate, University of KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa) 	<p>Ms Covadonga Rayon (ENRICH in Africa Project) & Ms Tshembani Khupane (South Africa’s Technology Innovation Agency)</p>	<p>DAISY, FREESIA & ORCHID ROOM</p>
<p>12:00 – 1:15 pm</p>	<p>Finals of the “Open Innovation Challenges”, with 3 finalist innovators (pitching for 3 minutes-each) for each of the 4 priority areas of the AU-EU Cooperation in Research & Innovation: (i) Public Health (6 finalists, 2 challenges), (ii) Green Transition (6 finalists, 2 challenges) and (iii) Innovation & Technology (3 finalists, 1 challenge), for a total number of 15 pitches.</p>	<p>Mr Charles Thou (Agorize for ENRICH in Africa) & Ms Thato Morokong (South Africa’s Department of Science and Innovation)</p>	<p>HALL 10</p>
<p>1:15 – 2:15 pm</p>	<p>Lunch break</p>		<p>HALL 8</p>



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<p>2:15 – 3:45 pm</p>	<p>AU-EU Innovators’ Pitching Sessions 3 minutes per pitch (~30 innovators)</p>	<p><i>For Green Transition:</i> Ms Eudy Mabuza (South Africa’s Department of Science and Innovation), <i>For Innovation & Technology:</i> Ms Faith Blakemore (ENRICH in Africa) <i>For Public Health:</i> Dr Vincenzo Lorusso (European Commission) <i>For Capacities for Science:</i> Mr Lukovi Seke (AUDA-NEPAD)</p>	<p>HALL 10</p>
<p>3:45 – 4:00 pm</p>	<p>Coffee break</p>		<p>HALL 8</p>
<p>4:00 – 6:00 pm</p>	<p>AU-EU Innovation Fair</p>		<p>HALL 8</p>
<p>6:00 – 6:40 pm</p>	<p>Wrapping up/Summary Session Award Ceremony for the ENRICH in Africa’s “Open Innovation Challenges” Awards to be handed by Mr Daan Du Toit (South Africa’s Department of Science and Innovation)</p> <p>Closing remarks by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Monica Idinoba (African Union Commission, Dept of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation) • Prof Aggrey Ambali (AUDA-NEPAD, Senior Advisor - Office of Science, Technology and Innovation) • Dr Vincenzo Lorusso (European Commission) 	<p>Award ceremony moderated by Mr Charles Thou (Agorize for ENRICH in Africa) & Ms Thato Morokong (South Africa’s Department of Science and Innovation)</p> <p>Dr Magdalena Gajdzinska (European Commission) & Ms Mahlet Teshome (African Union Commission)</p>	<p>HALL 10</p>



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6:40 – 9:00 pm	Networking Dinner/Reception		HALL 8
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Throughout the day, Throughout the day, the event will also feature permanent exhibitions of **~40 projects/organisations** [e.g. numerous African and European start-ups and SMEs, EDCTP (the partnership has an office in Cape Town), Horizon 2020 projects (e.g. ENRICH in Africa, SophiA and several others), , EURAXESS Africa, initiatives by corporations, South Africa’s Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), South Africa’s Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), South Africa’s National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI), European South African Science and Technology Advancement Programme (ESASTAP) and many more], in addition to the AU-EU Innovation Fair, featuring solutions by the innovators who will be pitching on the main stage.

The AU-EU Innovation Agenda

The AU-EU Innovation Agenda is a joint policy initiative that will govern the next decade of cooperation on Science, Technology and Innovation between Africa and Europe, with the aim to foster the translation of Research and Innovation into tangible products, services, businesses and jobs. From the EU side, the AU-EU Innovation Agenda is a strategic partnership supported by the Global Gateway as well as Horizon Europe. This Agenda includes four objectives, articulated into short-, medium- and long-term actions, across the four priority areas of the AU-EU cooperation on Research and Innovation, namely Public Health, Green Transition, Innovation and Technology and Capacity for Science, and the additional area of Cross-cutting issues.