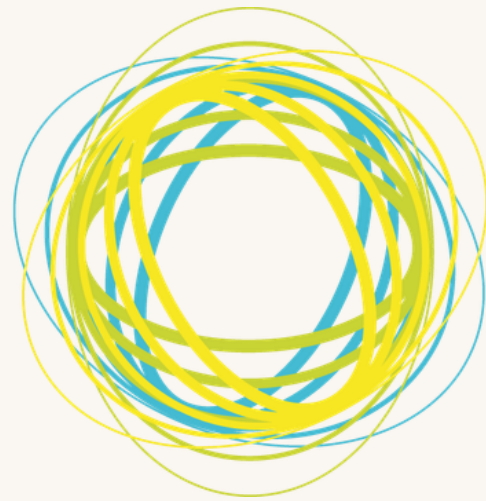




Welcome to the UNIPID Webinar on

**AU-EU SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY,
AND INNOVATION (STI) COLLABORATION FOR
FINNISH UNIVERSITIES**

25 August, 2026

13:00 -15:15 EEST

Housekeeping

 This webinar will be recorded

 The event chat will remain open throughout the webinar

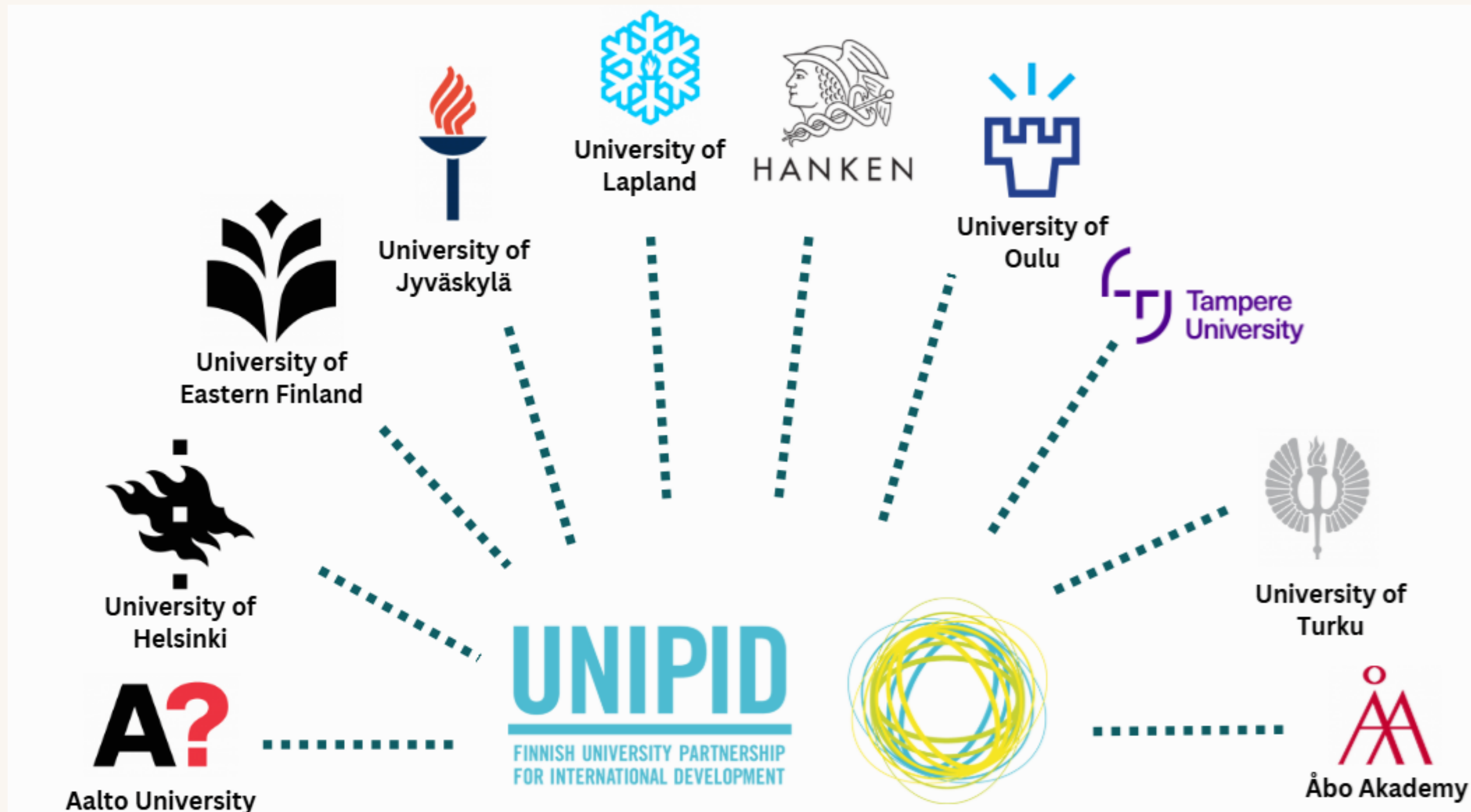
 Share your questions and comments in the chat at any time

 A dedicated Q&A session will follow the presentations

 Engage with fellow participants by sharing thoughts and responding to comments

 Keep the conversation lively, constructive, and respectful

About UniPID



Network of ten Finnish universities seeking to advance universities' global responsibility and promote global partnerships that advance sustainable development.

Services offered within the three pillars of higher education: Education, Research and Societal Impact.

Programme

13:00-13:05	Welcoming remarks	Kaisa Kurki, Director of UniPID
13:05-13:25	The framework of the AU-EU Science, Technology and Innovation Collaboration	Jens Hoegel, Team Lead, European Commission
13:25-13:40	UniPID's involvement in AU-EU STI collaboration	Antti Autio, UniPID
13:40-13:55	A case of AU-EU FNSSA research projects	Henry Ndegwa Maina, University of Helsinki
13:55-14:05	Research funder perspective on EU-AU STI collaboration	Johanna Hakala, Research Council of Finland
14:05-14:25	Open AU-EU Horizon calls	Eevi Laukkanen, Research Manager, University of Eastern Finland
14:25-14:35	Universities' EU representation and lobbying	Saara Harjula, Liaison Manager, University of Helsinki
14:35-14:45	Commentary by the Ministry of Education and Culture	Paavo-Petri Ahonen, Senior Ministerial Advisor
14:45-15:55	Commentary by the Team Finland Knowledge counsellor	Veera Virmasalo, TFK science counsellor for Southern Africa
15:55-15:10	Q&A	
15:10-15:15	Closing of the event	Minna Tanskanen, Vice Dean, University of Eastern Finland

Meet our speakers

AU-EU Science, technology, and innovation (sti) Collaboration



Jens Hoegel



Antti Autio



Henry Ndegwa Maina



Johanna Hakala



Eevi Laukkanen



Saara Harjula



Paavo-Petri Ahonen



Veera Virmasalo

Jens Hoegel

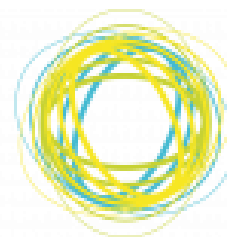
Team Leader, Resilience, Infrastructure and Productive Sectors, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG R&I), EU Commission

Jens Hoegel is an experienced EU official with a background spanning international relations and development cooperation, public financial management, business development, and Research and Innovation policy. During his career at the European Commission, he has held positions in Ireland, Nigeria, Somalia and Brussels, rejoining DG R&I in September 2024.

He is currently responsible for Research and Innovation relations between the European and African Union Commissions and their Member States, including the AU–EU High-Level Policy Dialogue on Science, Technology and Innovation. He also co-chaired the EC-AUC working group that prepared the AU–EU Innovation Agenda, adopted in July 2023, and is involved in preparations for the second AU–EU R&I Ministerial Meeting.



PANELIST



The **Positive Agenda** of the EU–Africa Cooperation on Science, Technology & Innovation

Jens Hoegel, Team Leader

Presentation prepared by Dr Vincenzo Lorusso,
Policy Officer

European Commission, DG Research & Innovation

UniPID AU-EU STI Webinar, 25 August 2026



EU-Africa cooperation in Research & Innovation (R&I)



- As a strategic partner, the EU seeks to **enhance cooperation with Africa** to promote targeted actions to finding locally adapted solutions to global challenges that often hit Africa hardest.
- The [Comprehensive EU strategy with Africa](#) and the [Global Approach to Research & Innovation \(R&I\)](#) are the EU's most recent policy initiatives that **prioritise R&I** as a key dimension of **sustainable development**.
 - The *Comprehensive EU Strategy with Africa* proposes to **scale up the EU's academic and scientific cooperation with Africa**, with a view to creating **prosperous knowledge societies** in both continents.
 - The *EU Global Approach to R&I* foresees **special openness vis-à-vis African countries** that wish to thrive as knowledge-based economies and accelerate their **sustainable and inclusive development**.
- The [AU-EU High Level Policy Dialogue \(HLPD\) on Science, Technology and Innovation \(STI\)](#) (est. 2010) is the **policy forum** where regular exchanges on R&I policy take place and where **long-term priorities** to strengthen cooperation are established. Under its aegis, the **first ever AU-EU R&I Ministerial Meeting** took place in **July 2020**, establishing the **4 joint priorities** of the AU-EU cooperation in R&I:



Public Health



Green Transition



Innovation & Technology



Capacities for Science

- **2nd AU-EU R&I Ministerial on 27 October 2026 in Addis Ababa**
- Two additional workstreams to be endorsed: **AI in Science** and **AU-EU Dialogue on Science Diplomacy**



The Joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda

Aiming to foster the translation of R&I into tangible goods, services, businesses and jobs in both Africa and Europe



- Drafted through a concerted “**Team Africa-Europe**” work, involving AU and the EU Member States and Commissions, under the **AU-EU High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)**.
- Working document published in **February 2022**, extensively discussed over a ‘**Stakeholder Dialogue Process**’ throughout 2022, culminated in the **AU-EU Innovation Agenda Stakeholder Event** in Nov. 2022 in Nairobi.
- **Final version** of the Agenda prepared building on the feedback and input received from Stakeholders. **Adopted on 19 July 2023**.

4 objectives:



Make it real

- **Translate innovative capacities and achievements into tangible outputs**, supporting sustainable growth and jobs, in particular for the youth



Generate impact by design

- **Foster - strengthen innovation ecosystems** to enhance socio-economic impact



Strengthen people, communities & institutions

- **Develop sustainable, long lasting and mutually beneficial higher education and R&I partnerships**



Learn, monitor, and scale it up

- **Scale-up instruments** that can take forward existing successful programmes and projects, enable - strengthen the knowledge triangle of education, R&I & place special focus on **public participation, transparency, and inclusion**



Short-, medium- and long-term set of actions, according to four joint priority areas:



- Public Health
- Green Transition
- Innovation & Technology
- Capacities for Science + the additional
- Cross-cutting issues



Mapping of **gaps & needs** for each priority area

- Currently under **implementation**. Supported, from the EU side, by **Horizon Europe** (e.g. “Africa Initiatives” and “Med Initiatives”), **Global Health EDCTP3** and **Global Gateway Africa – Europe Investment Package**.

HAPPY 3RD BIRTHDAY, AU-EU INNOVATION AGENDA!

Three years of bringing together R&I stakeholders across Africa and Europe, for stronger collaborations and impact!

***Here's to the next seven years...
and beyond!***



#AUEU #InnovationAgenda #PositiveAgenda #MakingItHappen #ItsHappening

Global
Gateway





6th European Union - African Union Summit: A Joint Vision for 2030

Together, we will step up our support to scientific cooperation between researchers to develop knowledge together, as well as sharing technology and expertise, including through a joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda. We will encourage exchanges of young citizens, volunteers and students, through the expanded Erasmus+ programme and develop partnerships between universities, in order to improve our mutual understanding and foster excellence. We will strive to facilitate cultural exchanges and the movement of artists and artworks between our two continents, and encourage mutual undertaking for the restitution of cultural assets and promote access to and protection of cultural heritage.



3rd EU-AU Ministerial Meeting, 21 May 2025
Joint communique

Prosperous and Sustainable agenda for Africa and Europe

15. Ministers took note of the adoption of the AU-EU Innovation Agenda and encouraged researchers and innovators to continue driving their scientific discoveries and innovative solutions for the benefit of sustainable economies and societies.

7th African Union (AU) – European Union (EU) Summit

Luanda, Angola
24-25 November 2025

15. We recognise the immense potential of a secure and trusted digital transformation, supported by effective e-governance systems and digital skill development, for creating economic opportunities, boosting sustainable and inclusive economic growth, while stressing the urgency to bridge the digital divide. We welcome the AU Digital Transformation Strategy and the EU International Digital Strategy and support further cooperation. We further underline the importance of promoting digital literacy and ensuring online safety, in particular for women and children. We resolve to strengthen efforts on **the development of regional innovation ecosystems**, including on human-centric and trustworthy artificial intelligence that respects intellectual property rights.
16. We promote and support innovative and climate-resilient initiatives across all transport modes, including an accelerated deployment of sustainable aviation fuels, the implementation of the Single African Air Transport Market, and sustainable transport systems that contribute to decarbonisation efforts, environmental protection, economic transformation and social inclusion.
17. We support the commitment towards sustainable and resilient agriculture and food systems transformation, as stressed by the UN Food Security Systems Summit +4 held in Addis Ababa this year and anchored in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Kampala Declaration, as strategic initiatives to accelerate progress across key dimensions of agricultural development including nutrition. We also reemphasize the work of the EU-AU Agriculture Ministerial Conference to foster the alignment of ambitions between CAADP and the EU Vision for Agriculture and Food. We share the view that agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture as well as food security, are fundamental common interests of Africa and Europe, representing key assets for prosperity and sustainability by contributing to growth and jobs in the two continents.
- 20. We commit to investing in education, research, science, technology, and skills development to drive further scientific discoveries and innovative solutions. We highlight the importance of youth as drivers for sustainable development and commit to supporting their empowerment, and active participation. We encourage further exchanges of young citizens, volunteers, students and researchers through existing programmes, and partnerships between universities and research organisations to foster mutual understanding and excellence.**

Full Declaration
[here](#)

A.U.-E.U. Innovation Agenda

The A.U.-E.U. Innovation Agenda is a joint initiative by the African Union and the E.U. to boost research and innovation cooperation. Launched at the 2022 A.U.-E.U. Summit, the agenda focuses on strengthening African and European innovation ecosystems to drive sustainable and inclusive growth.



SCITECH DIPLOMACY

New A.U.-E.U. Innovation Agenda puts science diplomacy into practice

4 min read — Free+

Adopted in 2023, the policy agreement is a major boost for multilateral science diplomacy between Africa and Europe.



SCITECH DIPLOMACY

Research and innovation helping to fuel Africa-Europe partnership

2 min read — Paid

Ministers urged creation of 'regional innovation ecosystems' that would include AI strategies and digital governance.



SCITECH DIPLOMACY

AI promoted for research and innovation in Africa and Europe

2 min read — Free+

An A.U.-E.U. workshop focused on how to use AI to enable the 'economic integration' and success of more technology startups.

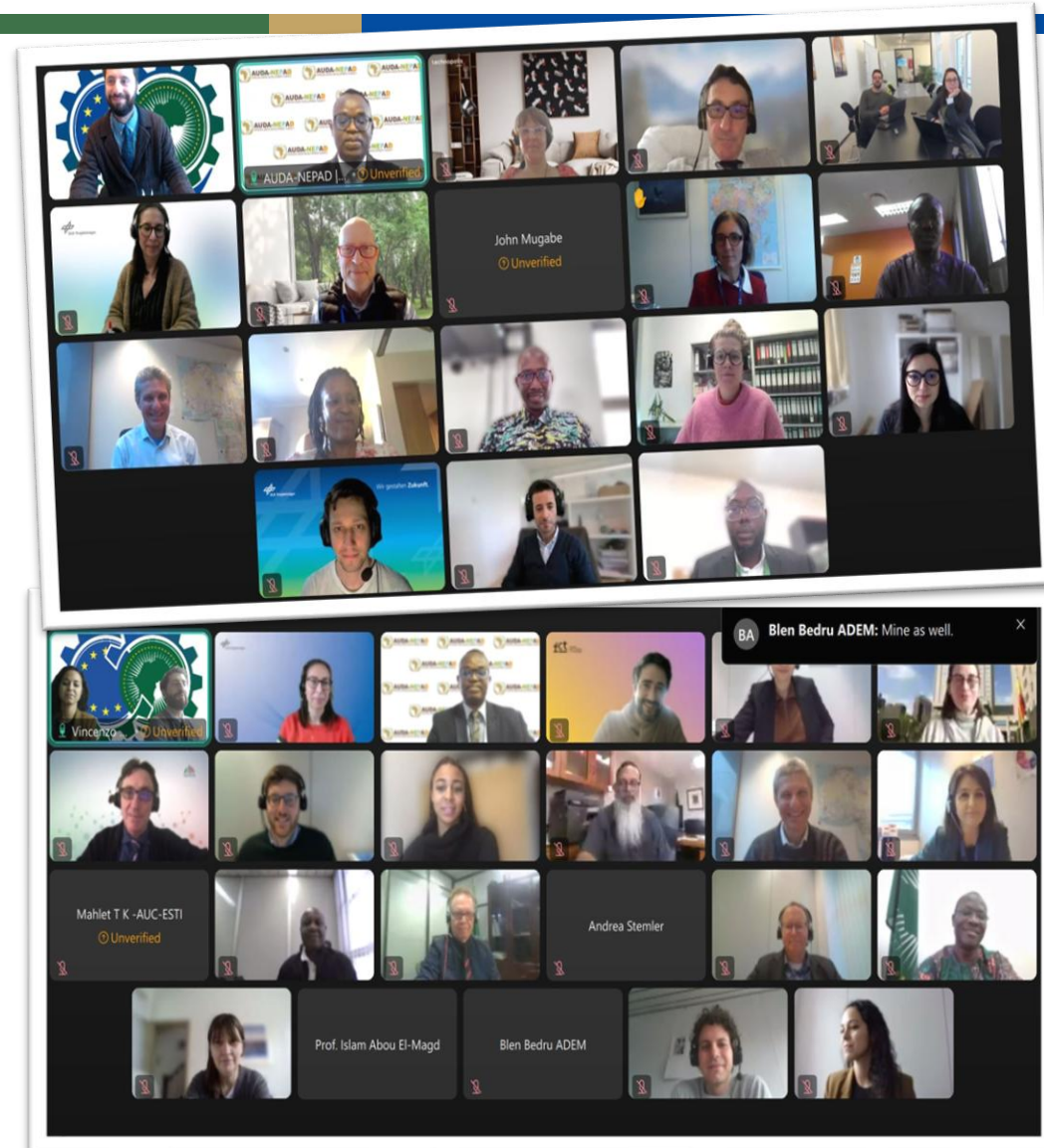


Link [here](#)

The AU-EU Innovation Agenda Working Group

Co-creating and co-doing, developing mutual understanding and trust

- Established initially as an “ad hoc” WG in 2021, coordinating the preparation of the [AU-EU Innovation Agenda](#) and its technical [Roadmap](#).
- Officialised in November 2023, after adoption.
- ~30 active Members (outcomes of ~130 invitations) – ~5 AU and EU MS regularly involved
- Now meeting monthly, in constant dialogue with the “Community of practice”
- A “practical model” of Science Diplomacy, enriched with People-to-People Diplomacy
- Steering numerous initiatives as part of the implementation of the Agenda, coordinated by dedicated “Task Forces”:
 1. “[Dashboard of the AU-EU Innovation Agenda](#)”
 2. Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (yearly exercise, with experts)
 3. Policy Briefs on Thematic Areas of the Agenda
 4. Dynamic Stakeholder Events:
 - i. [AU-EU Innovation Agenda Stakeholder Event](#) (Nairobi, 2022)
 - ii. [AU-EU Innovation Festival](#) (Cape Town, 2023)
 - iii. [Biannual Workshops](#) on Topics of the Agenda (“for and with Stakeholders”)
 - iv. [Innovation Fairs](#) (Nairobi 2022 – Cape Town 2023 – Brussels 2025 – Bari 2026)



AU-EU Innovation *Festival*

Cape Town
15th June 2023

#AUEU #InnovationFestival
#InnovationAgenda **#MakingItHappen**
#PositiveAgenda

CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTER
(CTICC)

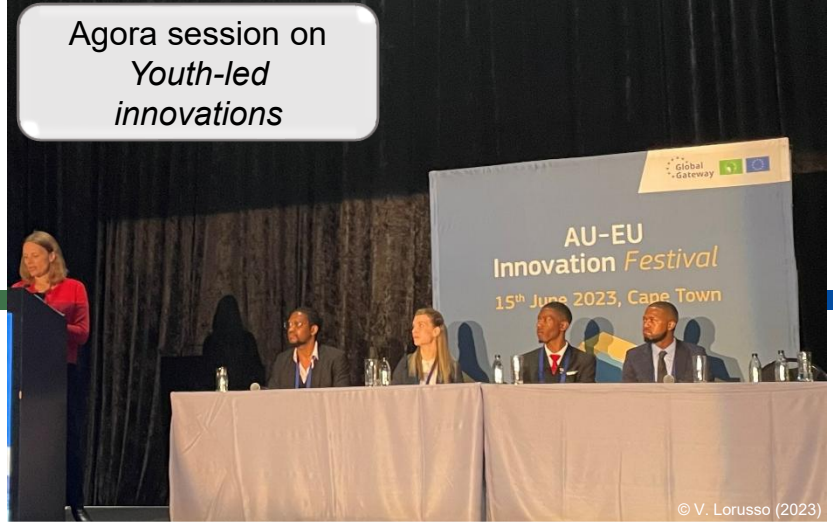
<https://au-eu-innovationfestival.service-facility.eu/>



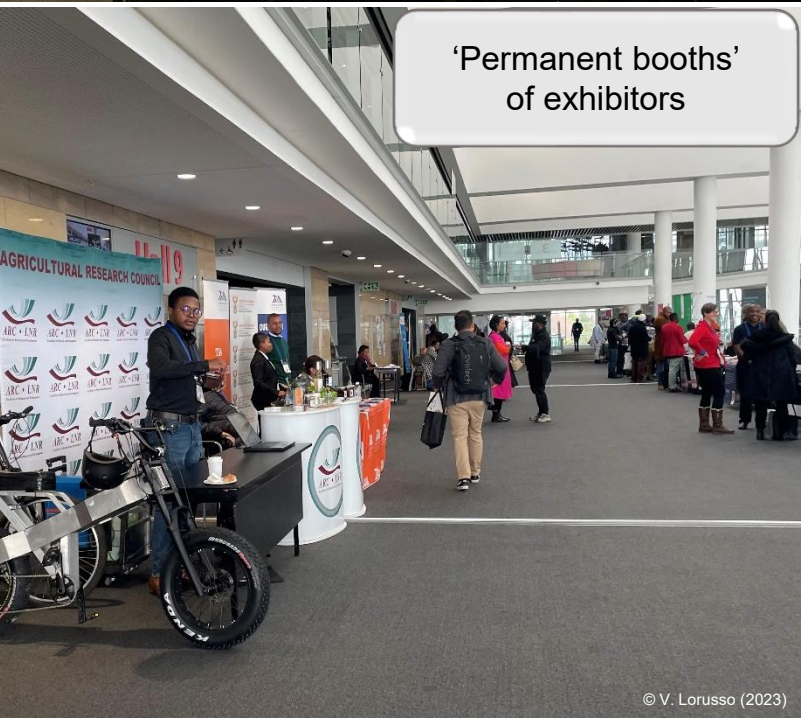
High-level institutional opening



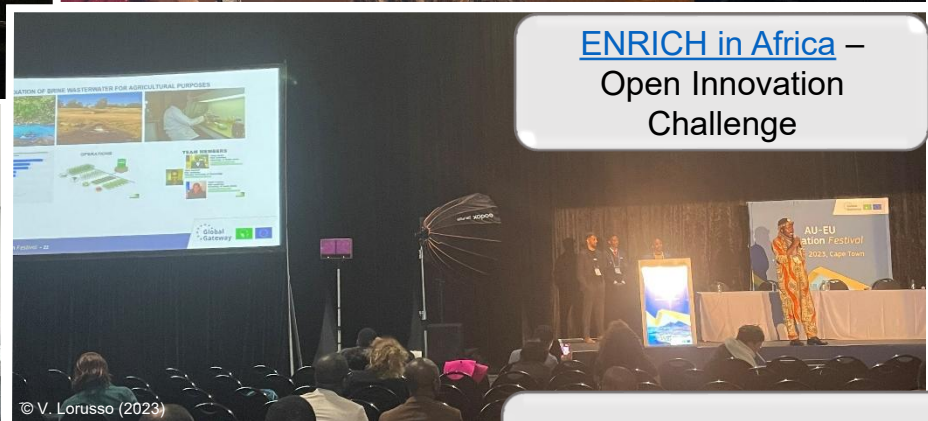
Agora session on Women-led innovations



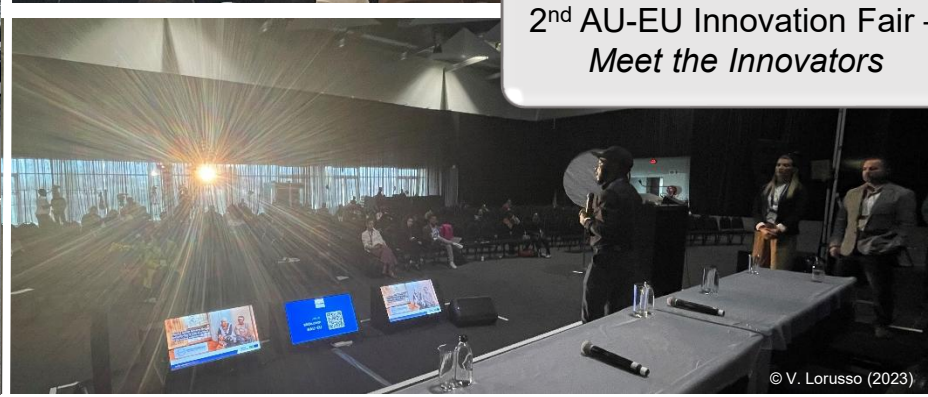
Agora session on Youth-led innovations



'Permanent booths' of exhibitors



ENRICH in Africa – Open Innovation Challenge



2nd AU-EU Innovation Fair – Meet the Innovators



Nigeria-EU Innovation Days

— Where ideas meet action —



Innovation Fair

“ENABLING THAT STEP FORWARD”

#MakingItPossible #NotARegularEvent



Thursday, 23 October 2025



Brussels, Belgium and online

PRE-REGISTER NOW!

500 participants on-site
>200 participants online



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

Global
Gateway





Bringing European and African innovation stakeholders together.



Who is ENRICH in Africa for?



Accelerators & Incubators

Incubators and accelerators provide an essential service to the innovation ecosystems of Europe and Africa, but they also need support. ENRICH in Africa is there to provide support through our activities and services, including this platform.



Innovation Facilitators

ENRICH in Africa involves key stakeholders facilitating innovation and representing the full triple-helix of business, academia, and governance in its activities. A strong, holistic EU-Africa innovation ecosystem ensures that the work done with incubators is sustainable and integrated into the wider economic landscape.



Entrepreneurs & Innovators

The main drivers of innovation in Africa and Europe. Through its Champions, ENRICH in Africa supports them with a wide range of support services and marketplace offerings.



Science, Technology and Research Actors

Researchers, academics, and R&D professionals are the backbone of innovation, generating the knowledge and discoveries that drive digital transformation. ENRICH in Africa, through the SEADE Digital Environment, supports these actors with tailored tools and services to bridge the gap between research excellence and market success, fostering meaningful EU-Africa research partnerships.



Cape Town, 14 June 2023

Horizon Europe Project

“Africa-Europe Innovation Platform (AEIP)”

(Jan. 2025 – June 2027)



What: The [Africa-Europe Innovation Platform \(AEIP\)](https://www.africaeuropeinnovation.net) connects stakeholders across the innovation value chain between Africa and Europe, acting as a key facilitator of the implementation of the 10 year- (2023-2033) AU-EU Innovation Agenda.

How: Connecting stakeholders with a dedicated virtual platform and devising/delivering tailor-made activities (trainings, matchmaking, networking, SMEs’ de-risking and support community management, etc.)



www.africaeuropeinnovation.net



Connect to a NETWORK OF NETWORKS



Association of African Universities

Academia

Operational Scope: Continental

Region: Africa & Europe

Expertise: Higher Education and Research (+5 more)

[View full profile](#) →



AU-EU Youth Voices Lab – Power of the Collective

Civil Society

Operational Scope: Continental

Region: Africa & Europe

Expertise: Capacity Building (Training, Mentorship & Certification Programs) (+6 more)

[View full profile](#) →



ENRICH GLOBAL

Business and Enterprise Support Organisation

Operational Scope: Continental

Region: Europe

Expertise: Higher Education and Research (+9 more)

[View full profile](#) →



European Business and Innovation Centre Network (EBN)

Business and Enterprise Support Organisation

Operational Scope: Continental

Region: Africa & Europe

Expertise: Capacity Building (Training, Mentorship & Certification Programs) (+3 more)

[View full profile](#) →

AfricaLics

Academia

Operational Scope: Continental

Region: Africa

Expertise: Higher Education and Research (+2 more)

[View full profile](#) →



AfriLabs

Business and Enterprise Support Organisation

Operational Scope: Continental

Region: Africa

Expertise: Capacity Building (Training, Mentorship & Certification Programs) (+3 more)

[View full profile](#) →



Grow through Partnerships & Access to Opportunities

➤ Partner Finder



Partner finder

The Partner Finder is a tool designed to facilitate connections between you and suitable individuals and organisations for potential collaboration.

Please complete the following details in order to proceed.

Organisation name

Expertise

- ☐ Higher Education and Research
- ☐ Capacity Building (Training, Mentorship & Certification Programs)
- ☐ Innovation & Entrepreneurship Support
- ☐ Youth Empowerment & Civil Society Engagement
- ☐ Policy Development
- ☐ Technology & Digital Innovation (IP related)
- ☐ Access to Finance & Investment Readiness

Here are your top recommendations

Association of African Universities

Network

Matched on:

Expertise, Category, Collaboration of Interest, Topic of Interest

View details →

African Students and Alumni Forum

Network

Matched on:

Category, Collaboration of Interest, Topic of Interest

View details →

Ghana Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer Officers Network

Network

Matched on:

Expertise, Collaboration of Interest, Topic of Interest

View details →

KIVUTECH

Network

Matched on:

Expertise, Collaboration of Interest, Topic of Interest

View details →

AfriLabs

Network

Matched on:

Expertise, Collaboration of Interest, Topic of Interest

View details →

DEEP Ecosystems

Network

Matched on:

Expertise, Collaboration of Interest, Topic of Interest

View details →

Grow through Partnerships & Access to Opportunities

Available Funding Opportunities

[Submit a funding opportunity](#)

Organiser ▾ Category ▾ Topic ▾

➤ Funding Opportunities



Investing in Young Business in Africa – Women Entrepreneurship for Africa (IYBA WE4A)

Organisation: Goodwell Invests

Deadline: 30 April 2026

[View details →](#)



Joint Innovation Facility (JIF) 2026 Call

Organisation: Africa-Europe Digital Innovation Bridge (AEDIB)

Deadline: 30 April 2026

[View details →](#)

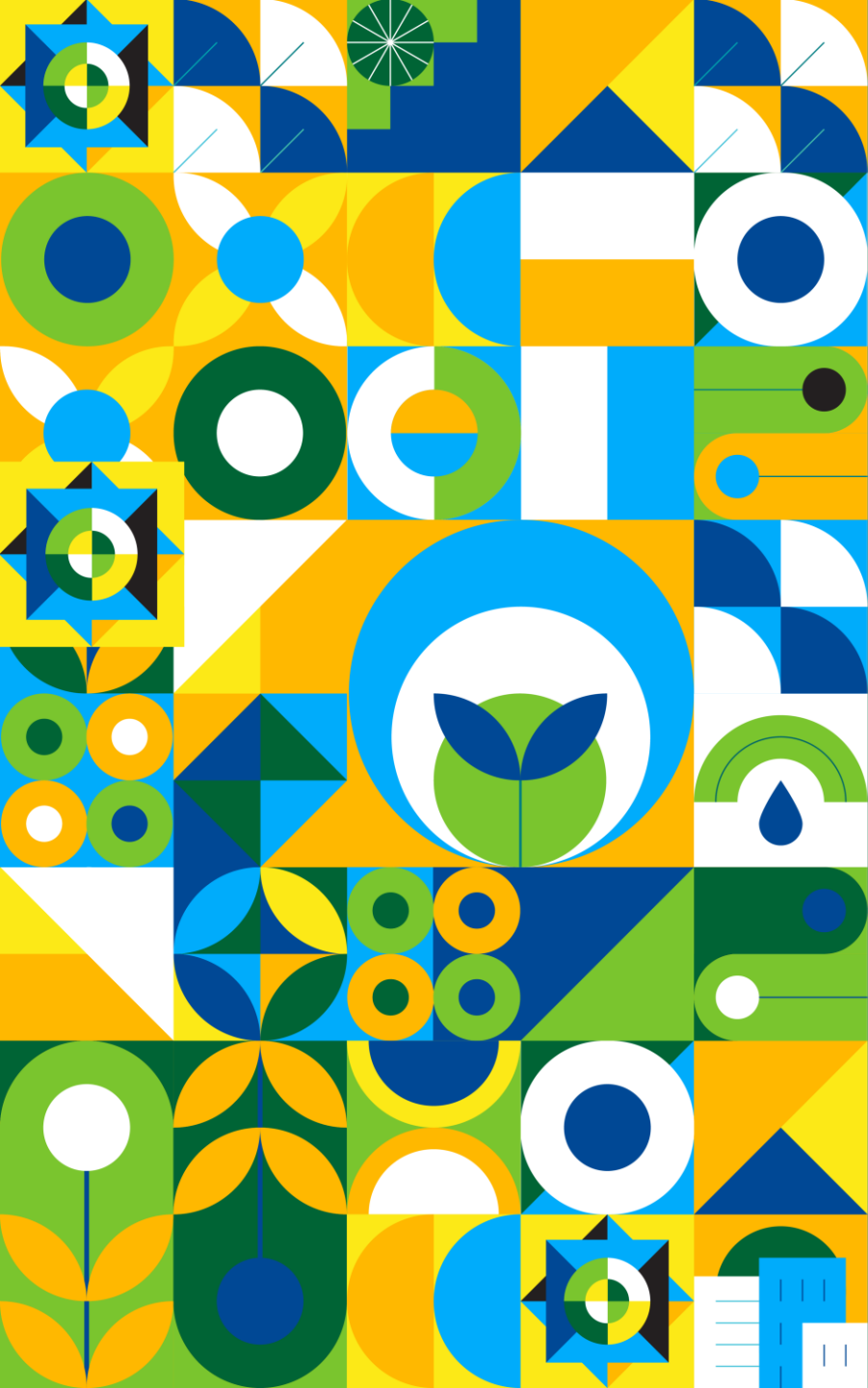


EUROGIA2030 – Call 30

Organisation: eureka

Deadline: 30 April 2026

[View details →](#)



Innovation Fair

on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture

Turning results into market successes



25 November 2026



CIHEAM Bari, Italy and online



[Link here](#)

#MakingItPossible #NotARegularEvent



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



5 Biannual Thematic Workshops

*On topics pertaining to the AU-EU Innovation Agenda,
identified at the beginning of each year*

- **November 2023:** Intellectual Property Rights (online)
 - **May 2024:** Access to finance for Innovations (online)
 - **December 2024:** Public health innovations (hybrid, Pretoria & online)
 - **April 2025:** AI for facilitating and accelerating R&I at the Africa-Europe interface (hybrid: GITEX Africa, Marrakech & online)
 - **December 2025:** Innovations for Climate Resilience & Sustainable Energy in Africa-Europe Collaborations (hybrid: Africa-Europe Foundation, Brussels & online)
 - **23 July 2026:** Youth-led Innovations (online)
 - **16 December 2026:** Social Sciences and Humanities in the AU-EU Innovation Agenda (hybrid: Paris & online)
- stay updated on [AU-EU Innovation Interface](#)





Horizon Europe R&I Framework Programme (2021-2027) – 95.5 BEUR

HORIZON EUROPE

EURATOM

SPECIFIC PROGRAMME: EUROPEAN DEFENCE FUND

*Exclusive focus on
defence research
& development*

Research
actions

Development
actions

SPECIFIC PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE & EIT*

Exclusive focus on civil applications



Pillar I EXCELLENT SCIENCE

European Research Council

Marie Skłodowska-Curie

Research Infrastructures



Pillar II GLOBAL CHALLENGES & EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS

Clusters

- Health
- Culture, Creativity & Inclusive Society
- Civil Security for Society
- Digital, Industry & Space
- Climate, Energy & Mobility
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture & Environment

Joint Research Centre



Pillar III INNOVATIVE EUROPE

European Innovation
Council

European Innovation
Ecosystems

European Institute of
Innovation & Technology*

WIDENING PARTICIPATION AND STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA

Widening participation & spreading excellence

Reforming & Enhancing the European R&I system

Fusion

Fission

Joint Research
Center

* The European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) is not part of the Specific Programme

Africa Initiative I

Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-2022

- **~350 MEUR, 36 topics** under **calls for proposals**, over 2 years- period:

1. *Public Health* (40 MEUR) 

2. *Green Transition* (215 MEUR) 

3. *Innovation & Technology* (11 MEUR) 

4. *Capacities for Science* (91.9 MEUR) 

[Factsheet](#) with outcomes and
[booklet](#) with projects details

Africa Initiative II

Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2024

- **~300 MEUR, 30 topics** under **calls for proposals**, over 2 years- period:

1. *Green Transition* (260 MEUR) 

2. *Innovation & Technology* (35 MEUR) 

3. *Capacities for Science* (9 MEUR) 

[Factsheet](#) with outcomes and
[booklet](#) with projects details

Africa Initiative III

Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025

- **500.5 MEUR, 24 topics** under **calls for proposals**, over 1 year- period:

1. *Public Health* (50 MEUR) 

2. *Green Transition* (241 MEUR) 

3. *Innovation & Technology* (186.5) 

4. *Capacities for Science* (3.5) 

5. *Cross-cutting issues* (19.5 MEUR) 

+ Africa Initiative IV
part of Horizon Europe Work
Programme 2026-2027



Africa Initiative IV

In Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026-2027



- Building on the positive outcomes of the **Africa Initiative I+II+III** of Horizon Europe Work Programmes 2021-2025.
- **25 topics** under **calls for proposals** amounting to **~500 MEUR** boosting Africa-Europe cooperation on Research & Innovation.
- Enabling the implementation of the **medium-term** and **long-term actions** of the **AU-EU Innovation Agenda**, aiming to **translate R&I into tangible positive impact on the ground**.
- Publication of Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026-2027: **12 December 2025** (**List of topics: [EU funding & tenders' portal](#)**).
- Several information and training sessions being scheduled for **January and February 2026**:
 - [Regional webinar in English](#) (20 Jan. 2026)
 - [Regional webinar in French](#) (21 Jan. 2026)
 - Regional webinar in Portuguese + country-specific: Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, and many more.

Participation of *African countries* in Horizon Europe vs Horizon 2020

(updated 21 May 2026)

Programme	Participation (unique participations)		Overall signed grants	Net EU contribution	
	Overall	Per year average		Overall (MEUR)	Per year (MEUR)
H2020	1,312 (617)	187 (88)	515	240	32.9
HORIZON EUROPE	1,528 (724)	278 (132)	542	478	87
% Trend	+16.5% (+17.3%)	+48.7% (+50%)	(+5.2%)	+99.2%	+164.4%

To 'conclude':

- The 10 year- AU-EU Innovation Agenda provides for an unprecedented, concrete and collaborative opportunity, ***to turn innovations into positive impact***, also in broader Africa-Europe relations.
- ⇒ Starting with **co-identification** of common issues (for mutual benefits)
- ⇒ Proceeding with **co-creation** (of policies, instruments, target solutions, etc.)
- ⇒ Continuing with **co-doing** (joint implementation)
 - Shared commitment, responsibility and accountability
- Throughout this journey, **learning from each other**.
- In this process, **everybody's** input is needed.
 - Operating within a progressively growing, interconnected, **interdisciplinary & multi-sectoral *Community of practice***.



#PositiveAgenda

#InnovationAgenda

Thank You!

Jens Hoegel

Team Leader, EU-Africa Cooperation on STI
European Commission, DG Research & Innovation

jens.hoegel@ec.europa.eu

#PositiveAgenda
#InnovationAgenda
#MakingItHappen

UniPID AU-EU STI Webinar, 25 August 2026

Africa Initiative IV – Topics' overview

Public Health



- Prevention and treatment of infectious diseases (e.g. small molecules & monoclonal antibodies)
- Novel vaccines against viruses with epidemic potential
- Innovative antimicrobials for resistant pathogens
- Better understanding and anticipation of impacts of climate change on health

Green Transition



- Renewable energy & energy security in Africa
- Climate & weather models in Africa
- Africa-EU CO-FUND action on climate
- Modelling & prediction of extreme events
- AU-EU Partnership on Food & Nutrition Security & Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA)
- Water-nutrition-energy nexus for sustainable & climate smart agriculture in Africa
- Food processing in Africa
- Plant health for reduction of farm & storage losses in Africa
- All-Atlantic Ocean Research & Innovation Alliance (AAORIA)

Innovation & Technology



- International cooperation in AI
- AI for early warning and preparedness

Capacities for Science



- Strengthening the international dimension of research infrastructures

Cross-cutting issues



- Democracy in LMICs
- Development aid & democratic governance
- Human rights
- Sustainable cultural tourism
- Creative alliances: global partnership in cultural policies & Cultural & Creative Industries (CCI)'s innovation
- Supporting post-conflict democracy & reconstruction

Med Initiative III – Calls for proposals

Call ID	Title	year	Budget	Opening	Deadline
HORIZON-HLTH-2026-01-DISEASE-04	Development of novel vaccines for viral pathogens with epidemic potential	2026	44,200,000.00	10/02/2026	16/04/2026
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-05	Development of novel small molecule antiviral therapeutics for pathogens with epidemic potential	2027	44,200,000.00	10/02/2027	13/04/2027
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-07	Development of monoclonal antibodies to prevent and treat infections from Filo-, Nairo-, Phenui-, Picorna- and Toga viruses	2027	37,300,000.00	10/02/2027	13/04/2027
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-08	Development of innovative antimicrobials against pathogens resistant to antimicrobials	2027	44,200,000.00	10/02/2027	13/04/2027
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-06	Development of monoclonal antibodies to prevent and treat infections from Flaviviruses	2027	37,300,000.00	10/02/2027	13/04/2027
HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-DEMOCRACY-07	Supporting post-conflict democracy and reconstruction	2026	12,000,000.00	12/05/2026	23/09/2026
HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-HERITAGE-05	Creative alliances: Fostering global partnerships in cultural policies and CCI innovation	2026	15,000,000.00	12/05/2026	23/09/2026
HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-DEMOCRACY-02	Understanding the forms of local democracy in low-income and low-middle income countries	2026	12,000,000.00	12/05/2026	23/09/2026
HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-DEMOCRACY-05	Development aid and democratic governance	2027	12,000,000.00	13/05/2027	23/09/2027
HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-DEMOCRACY-08	Global Human Rights and EU values	2027	12,000,000.00	13/05/2027	23/09/2027
HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-HERITAGE-06	Future-proofing sustainable cultural tourism	2027	14,500,000.00	13/05/2027	23/09/2027
HORIZON-CL4-2026-04-DIGITAL-EMERGING-09	Advanced Local Digital Twins using AI for Early Warning and Preparedness (IA)	2026	6,000,000.00	15/01/2026	15/04/2026
HORIZON-CL4-2027-04-DIGITAL-EMERGING-06	International cooperation in AI (IA)	2027	3,000,000.00	17/11/2026	18/03/2027
HORIZON-CL5-2026-03-D3-18	Grid-forming capabilities for more resilient and RES-based electricity grids	2026	20,000,000.00	18/12/2025	31/03/2026
HORIZON-CL6-2026-01-BIODIV-02	Developing methods to assess the presence, functions and sensitivity of groundwater ecosystems	2026	10,000,000.00	17/04/2026	17/09/2026
HORIZON-MISS-2026-03-OCEAN-03	By fishers, for fishers: co-management of marine and freshwaters ecosystems and resources	2026	31,000,000.00	04/02/2026	23/09/2026
HORIZON-MISS-2027-03-OCEAN-01	Increasing riparian and coastal areas resilience to climate change, including in waterfront cities and islands.	2027	35,700,000.00	09/02/2027	21/09/2027
HORIZON-MISS-2027-03-OCEAN-02	Circularity of seafood supply chain	2027	30,900,000.00	09/02/2027	21/09/2027

Cluster 1 – Health

Action ID	Topic title	Budget (MEUR)	Type of Action (Expected grants)	Deadline
HORIZON-HLTH-2026-01-ENVHLTH-01	Towards a better understanding and anticipation of the impacts of climate change on health	55	RIA (7-8)	16 April 2026
HORIZON-HLTH-2026-01-DISEASE-04	Development of novel vaccines for viral pathogens with epidemic potential	45	RIA (4)	16 April 2026
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-05	Development of novel small molecule antiviral therapeutics for pathogens with epidemic potential	45	RIA (4)	13 April 2027
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-06	Development of monoclonal antibodies to prevent and treat infections from Flaviviruses	38	RIA (4)	13 April 2027
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-07	Development of monoclonal antibodies to prevent and treat infections from Filo-, Nairo-, Phenui-, Picorna- and Toga viruses	38	RIA (4)	13 April 2027
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-08	Development of innovative antimicrobials against pathogens resistant to antimicrobials	45	RIA (5)	13 April 2027

CSA = Coordination and Support Action | IA = Innovation Action | RIA = Research & Innovation Action

Cluster 2 – Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society

Action ID	Topic title	Budget (MEUR)	Type of Action (Expected grants)	Deadline
HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-HERITAGE-05	Creative alliances: Fostering global partnerships in cultural policies and CCI innovation	15	RIA (4)	23 September 2026
HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-DEMOCRACY-08	Global Human Rights and EU values	12	RIA (4)	23 September 2027
HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-DEMOCRACY-05	Development aid and democratic governance	12	RIA (3)	23 September 2027
HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-DEMOCRACY-02	Understanding the forms of local democracy in low-income and low-middle income countries	12	RIA (3)	23 September 2026
HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-DEMOCRACY-07	Supporting post-conflict democracy and reconstruction	12	RIA (3)	23 September 2026
HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-HERITAGE-06	Future-proofing sustainable cultural tourism	14.5	RIA (3)	23 September 2027

Cluster 4 – Digital, Industry and Space

Action ID	Topic title	Budget (MEUR)	Type of Action (Expected grants)	Deadline
HORIZON-CL4-2026-04-DIGITAL-EMERGING-09	Advanced local digital twins using AI for early warning and preparedness	6	IA (1)	15 April 2026
HORIZON-CL4-2027-04-DIGITAL-EMERGING-06	International cooperation in AI	3	IA (2)	18 March 2027

CSA = Coordination and Support Action | **IA** = Innovation Action | **RIA** = Research & Innovation Action

Cluster 5 – Climate, Energy and Mobility

Action ID	Topic title	Budget (MEUR)	Type of Action (Expected grants)	Deadline
HORIZON-CL5-2026-07-D1-05	Improving climate and weather models for Africa	21	RIA (3)	15 April 2026
HORIZON-CL5-2027-01-D1-11	Africa–EU co-fund action on climate	15	CO-fund (1)	2027
HORIZON-CL5-2027-02-D3-10	Renewable Energy Valleys in Africa to increase energy security and energy access in Africa	9	IA (2)	31 March 2027
HORIZON-CL5-2027-01-D1-07	Advancing understanding, modelling and prediction of extreme events in a changing climate	18	RIA (3)	4 March 2027
HORIZON-CL5-2027-01-D1-12	Better understanding and attribution of land and ocean carbon sources and sinks	18	RIA (3)	4 March 2027

CSA = Coordination and Support Action | **IA** = Innovation Action | **RIA** = Research & Innovation Action

Cluster 6 – Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture & Environment

Action ID	Topic title	Budget (MEUR)	Type of Action (Expected grants)	Deadline
HORIZON-CL6-2026-02-FARM2FORK-13	Boosting plant health and reducing losses on farm and during storage for sustainable growth in Africa (FNSSA)	12	RIA (2)	14 April 2026
HORIZON-CL6-2026-02-FARM2FORK-14	Green transition food processing in Africa	11	RIA (2)	14 April 2026
HORIZON-CL6-2027-02-FARM2FORK-09	AU–EU Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA)	7	CSA (1)	23 September 2027
HORIZON-CL6-2027-02-FARM2FORK-02 (two-stage)	Optimising the water-nutrient-energy nexus for sustainable and climate smart agriculture in Africa (FNSSA)	12	RIA (2)	08 April 2027
HORIZON-CL6-2026-03-GOVERNANCE-04	Supporting All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance	4.5	CSA (1)	15 April 2026

CSA = Coordination and Support Action | **IA** = Innovation Action | **RIA** = Research & Innovation Action

Antti Autio

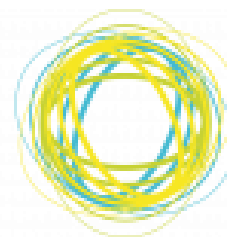
UniPID

Antti Autio is a project manager in EU–AU Science and Innovation Partnerships at UniPID. His work focuses on AU-EU research and innovation cooperation, science-policy dialogue, food and nutrition security, and sustainable agriculture.

He is also a doctoral researcher in human geography at the University of Helsinki, studying climate change adaptation among smallholder farmers in Kenya.



PANELIST



UNIPID

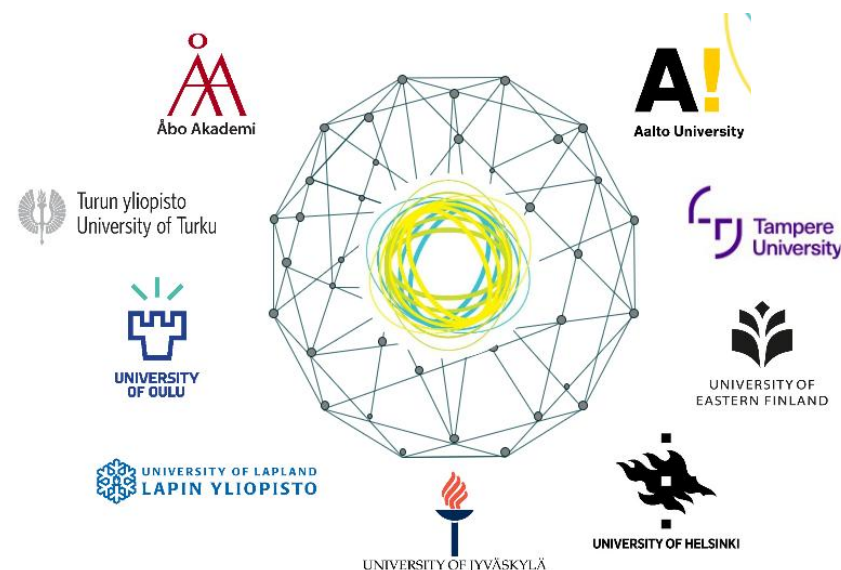
FINNISH UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Connecting Finnish universities to AU–EU science, technology and innovation cooperation

UniPID Webinar | 25 August 2026

Antti Autio

UniPID as a bridge to AU–EU STI collaboration

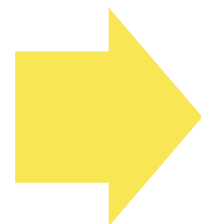


UNIPID
FINNISH UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



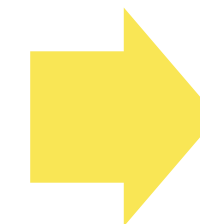
FINNISH UNIVERSITIES

Researchers
Research services
Institutional partnerships



UniPID

National university network
Connector



AU–EU STI ECOSYSTEM

Programmes
Partnerships
Networks
Policy processes

UniPID aims to help create entry points between Finnish university expertise and wider African–European cooperation, and support R&I policy processes.



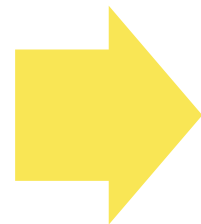
THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP
LE PARTENARIAT AFRIQUE-UE

From policy dialogue to implementation

2010

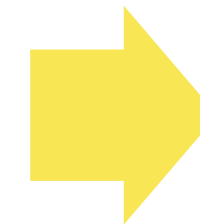
**AU–EU High-Level Policy
Dialogue on STI established**
Tripoli Summit

**2016-2017 FNSSA & CCSE
Priorities**



2023

**Joint AU–EU Innovation
Agenda 2023–2033**
*From research cooperation
towards innovation and impact*

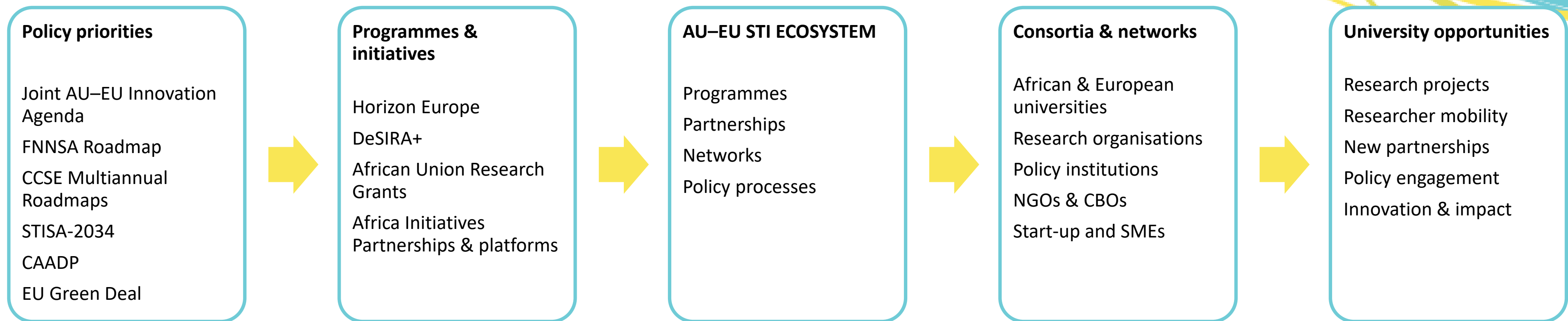


2025–2026

**A strategic partnership
moving into implementation**
*Horizon Europe · Africa
Initiative IV · Global Gateway ·
joint programmes*

AU–EU STI cooperation has evolved from policy dialogue towards increasingly structured and long-term implementation.

From policy framework to university opportunities



The challenge is often not the lack of opportunities but knowing where to connect.

FNSSA as an example

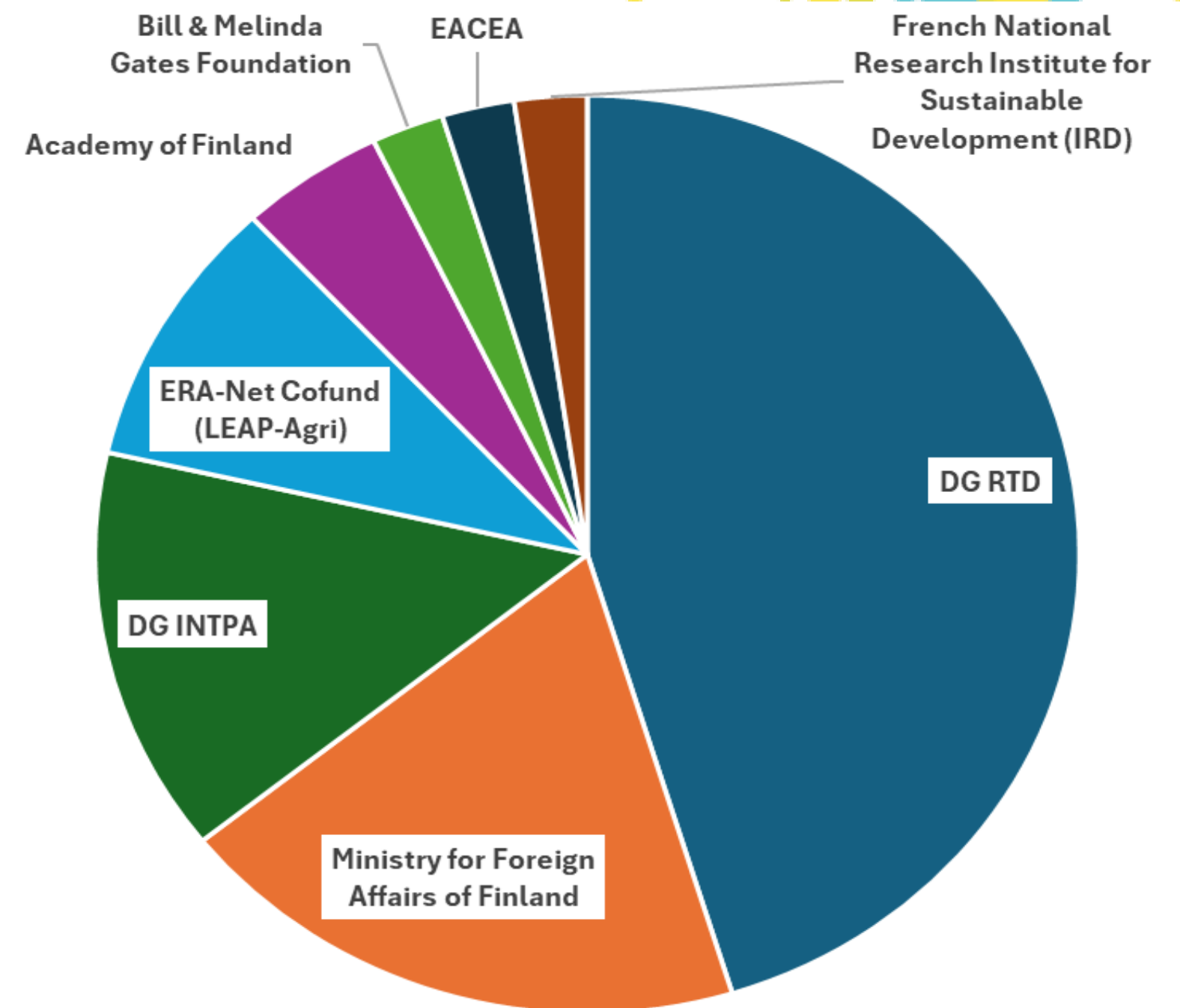
FUNDING: MORE THAN 1B€ (+800M€ BY EC) MOBILIZED BY SEPTEMBER 2024

- **Horizon 2020** (41 projects) + **Horizon Europe** (21 projects)
- **PRIMA** (20 European & African countries co-funding 238 joint projects)
- **FOSC** (18 European & African countries co-funding 22 joint R&I projects)
- **LEAP-Agri** (18 European & African countries co-funding 27 joint R&I projects)
- **Development Cooperation Instrument** (African Union Research Grants II, 32 projects in 30 African countries; DeSIRA, 61 projects in 30 African countries)



Involvement of Finland in FNSSA (by 2024)

- 48 FNSSA-related projects (€149.4M total); 19 coordinated by Finnish institutions.
- Key FNSSA Roadmap priority is sustainable intensification.
- Multi-ministry co-funding (MFA, AKA, Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry).
- Involved in ERA-Net Cofund LEAP-Agri and DeSIRA



Finnish universities are already connected

Research & Innovation	Education & Capacity	Policy & Science Diplomacy	Partnerships & Networks
• Horizon Europe projects • Collaborative research • Innovation & co-creation	• Joint learning & curricula • Researcher & student mobility • Capacity strengthening	• Contribute expertise to policy processes • AU–EU STI dialogues • Evidence for decision-making	• Build long-term African–European partnerships • Join thematic networks & platforms • Develop future consortia

Engagement is not only about joining a funding call – universities can connect through research, education, policy and long-term partnerships.

UniPID's project pathway in AU–EU collaboration

- **2008–2014**
Building the AU–EU STI foundation
CAAST-NET · CAAST-Net Plus · DocLinks · ERAfrica
- **2015–2021**
Connecting Finnish researchers to bi-regional cooperation
RINEA · FinCEAL · LEAP-Agri
- **2018–2025**
From networks to long-term partnerships
LEAP4FNSSA · PRE-LEAP-RE · LEAP-RE
- **2023–2027 →**
Operationalising platforms and expanding collaboration
CEA-FIRST · GLOBUS · AKIS4FNSSA



From projects to platforms: UniPID has contributed to AU–EU STI cooperation across FP7, Horizon 2020, Horizon Europe and national instruments.

What EU–Africa collaboration for us looks like in practice

CEA-FIRST

- Food systems & science–policy cooperation
Horizon Europe · 2023–2027
- Building the International Research Consortium on FNSSA
- connecting African and European R&I communities
- supporting AU–EU FNSSA policy processes
- knowledge, working groups and research coordination
- Illustrates:
Science–policy · Networks · Long-term R&I partnership



LEAP-RE

- Renewable energy R&I partnership
Horizon 2020 · 2020–2025
- Building a long-term AU–EU partnership on renewable energy
- joint research and innovation
- research funding and capacity building
- partnership governance and coordination
- Illustrates:
Co-funding · R&I · Partnership building



GLOBUS

- Higher education cooperation
Team Finland Knowledge · 2026–2027
- Connecting Finnish and Southern African universities through education
- jointly developed virtual courses
- Collaborative International Online Learning (COIL)
- sustainable development education
- UniPID–SANORD institutional cooperation
- Illustrates:
Education · Capacity · Institutional partnerships



What UniPID can offer member universities

CONNECT

- Find partners & networks
- African and European research partners
- thematic networks and platforms
- consortium connections

NAVIGATE

- Understand the landscape
- AU–EU policy developments
- funding opportunities
- emerging priorities and initiatives

- Develop collaboration
- consortium building
- project ideas and partnerships
- pathways towards proposals

CONVENE

- Bring people together
- webinars and workshops
- matchmaking and thematic events
- research–policy dialogue

- Increase visibility
- showcase Finnish expertise
- connect research with policy actors
- promote projects and researchers internationally

REPRESENT & LINK

- Connect Finland to wider processes
- AU–EU STI networks and platforms
- European and African stakeholders
- Finnish ministries, funders and universities

UniPID works on the basis of trust and confidentiality and does not itself conduct research.

How to engage

1. Tell us what you are looking for

- Research themes · regions · partners · funding interests

2. Preferably engage early

- Before the consortium and proposal are already fixed

3. Join the networks

- Events · thematic groups · project pipelines · matchmaking

4. Use UniPID as a platform

- Share expertise · find partners · connect to policy and international processes



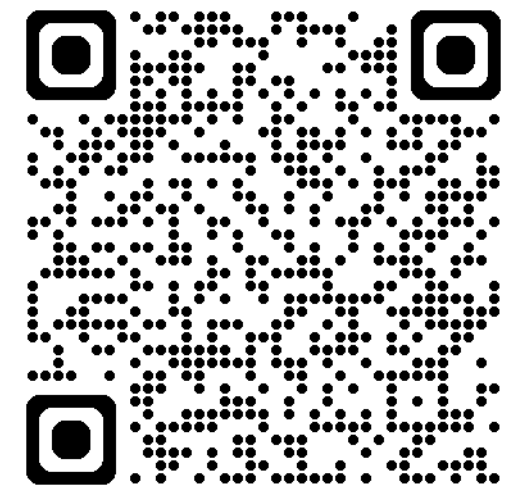
Get involved: IRC-FNSSA

- **AU-EU International Research Consortium on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture**
- AU–EU platform for collaboration on food systems transformation
- Supports thematic exchange, research coordination and science–policy links
- For universities and researchers working on food, nutrition, agriculture, sustainability and related themes
- **Scan to learn more**



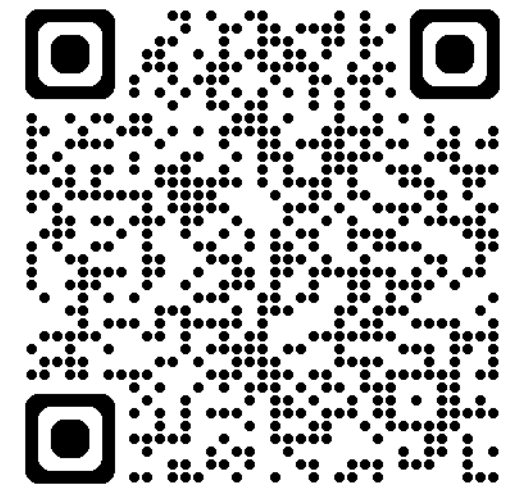
IRC

AU-EU International
Research Consortium on
Food, Nutrition Security and
Sustainable Agriculture



Get involved: LEAP-Energy

- **Long-term EU–Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on Renewable Energy**
- AU–EU platform for renewable energy research and innovation cooperation
- Connects research, innovation, networking, capacity building and funding opportunities
- For universities and researchers working on energy, climate change and sustainability
- **Scan to explore opportunities**

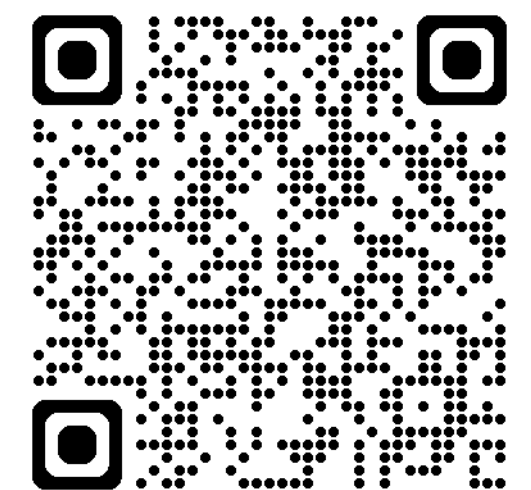


Get involved: AEIP

- AU–EU platform connecting stakeholders across the **innovation value chain** in Africa and Europe
- Acts as a “**network of networks**” supporting implementation of the AU–EU Innovation Agenda
- Connects academia, policymakers, start-ups, SMEs, investors, funders, support organisations and civil society
- Supports partnership building, funding access, capacity development, mobility and knowledge exchange
- For universities and researchers interested in innovation, cross-sector partnerships, research uptake and connections with wider innovation ecosystems
- • Scan to join the platform



AEIP
AFRICA ◀ EUROPE
INNOVATION PLATFORM



Take-away message

AU–EU STI collaboration is complex, but Finnish universities do not have to enter it alone.

Thank you!



Henry Ndegwa Maina

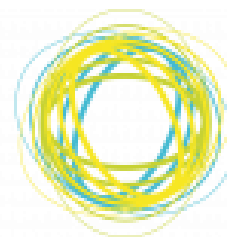
University of Helsinki

Ndegwa Maina is an associate professor in Food Chemistry at the University of Helsinki. His passion as a researcher is to understand the intricate relationship between food and human health. At present his research work focuses on toxins in food, the health benefits of cereal fibre, tailored bioprocessing of cereals and legumes to enhance safety, sensory and nutritional quality, and valorization of food industry side-streams.

In recent years, he has established collaborative partnerships with research institutions across the Global South to advance the development of sustainable food systems. Through several international projects, he has explored innovative technologies for the utilization of local food resources, with the goal of improving food and nutrition security.



PANELIST





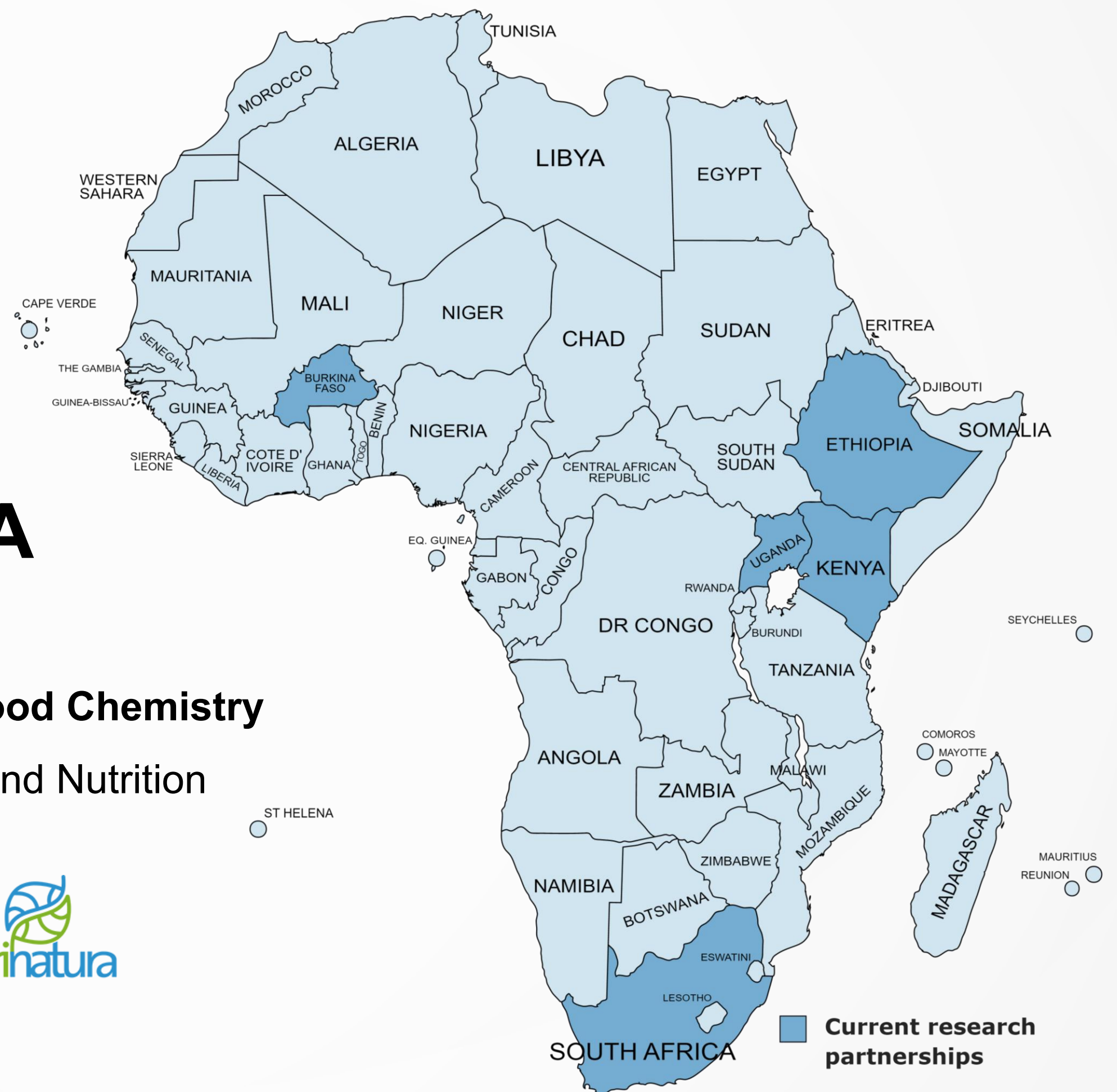
A CASE OF AU-EU FNSSA RESEARCH PROJECTS

Ndegwa H. Maina | Associate Professor in Food Chemistry

University of Helsinki | Department of Food and Nutrition

University of Helsinki representative

- AU-EU International Research Consortium
- The European Alliance on Agricultural knowledge for Development





COLLABORATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Shifting towards co-production of knowledge

Knowledge flows in both directions

– South to North and North to South

Two way capacity building

Access to research infrastructure

Joint training of students, researchers, and professionals.

Enhanced global relevance and impact of research

Exposure to diverse perspectives and research topic

Educated future leaders drive sustainable development.

Strengthened institutions and research networks benefit future generations.





MY JOURNEY

Focused funding

- Academy of Finland
 - (Develop program) 2019-2023
- Team Finland Knowledge
 - Higher Education Partnership (HEP) Programme 2023-2026
- GIZ and MFA Finland (Greening) 2025-2026

EU funding

- **ERA-AFRICA** funding 2015-2018
- **H2020** WP leader (Innofood Africa) 2020-2024
 - Project conception,
 - Planning and writing (learning)
- **2023:** Own application as coordinator(Put to waiting list)
- **2025:** Own application as coordinator (funded) starting 2026



ERAfrica Call for Proposals 2013 *Call & Application Details*

Funding Parties:

- Burkina Faso, €55 000
- Ivory Coast, €500 000
- Egypt €300 000
- Kenya €500 000
- South Africa €400 000
- Austria €200 000
- Belgium €375 000 (3 funders)
- Finland €300 000 (2 funders)
- France €950 000
- Germany €800 000
- Netherlands €250 000
- Portugal €200 000
- Turkey €300 000



Overview: A Joint Call for Proposals

Time frame:

- Publication: January 15, 2013
- Deadline: April 15, 2013

Participants:

- Open to eligible institutions from countries with one or more Funding Party participating in the Call

3 funding instruments:

1. collaborative research
2. collaborative innovation
3. capacity building

3 funding themes:

1. Renewable Energy
2. Interfacing Challenges
3. New Ideas



ERAfrica is a coordination and support action
funded under the European Union FP7 programme
Grant agreement no.: 266603





INTERFACING CHALLENGE: SUSTAINABLE AND NUTRITION SENSITIVE FOOD SYSTEMS



FINLAND: University of Helsinki

- Food Chemistry
- Cereal technology

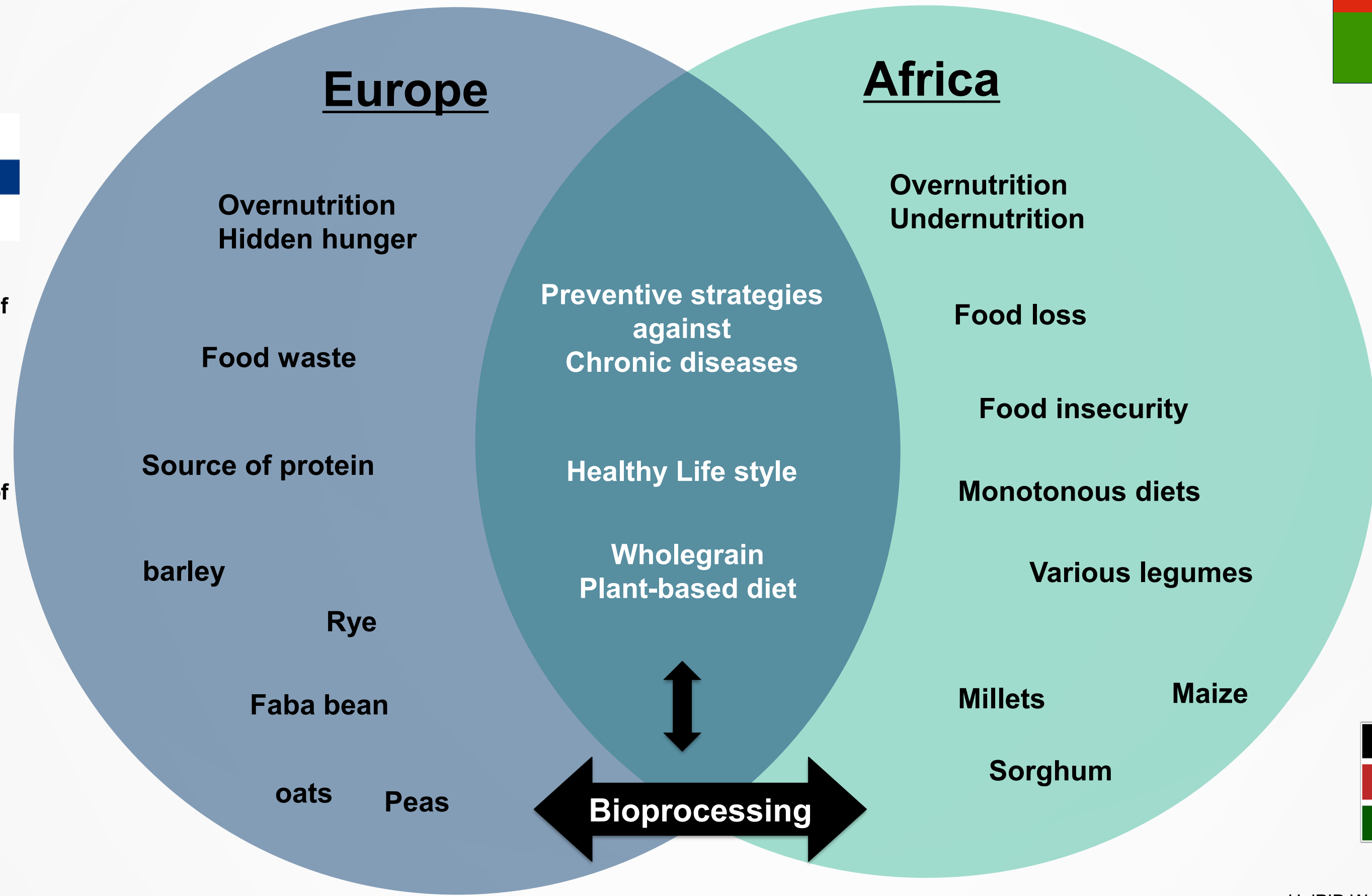
PORTUGAL: College of Biotechnology
Portuguese Catholic University

- Nutrition
- Food microbiology



**HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI**

Faculty of agriculture and forestry



BURKINAFASO: Institut de Recherche en Sciences Appliquées et Technologies (IRSAT)

- Food technology
- Food microbiology

KENYA: University of Nairobi

- Food technology
- Food microbiology



UniPID Webinar: AU-EU science collaboration



PROMOTING WHOLEGRAIN CONSUMPTION

ERA-AFRICA PROJECT: 2014-2018

- **Focus on Indigenous grains,**
 - Sorghum, millet,
 - Value-chain development
 - Reduce import (wheat)
- Consumption of whole grain
- Bioprocessing



- Safety (Mycotoxins)
 - Microbial Biotransformation
 - Binding

Academy funded project 2019-2023

HEP program: Nutrition and safety in school feeding programs

MFA 2023-2026



50-80% Sorghum/wheat



Locally-driven co-development of plant-based value chains towards a more sustainable African food system with healthier diets and export potential



Objective: To develop new sustainable value chains to
produce and distribute diverse and healthy foods from
African farms to local and export markets.

13 African  **+ 5 EU partners**



SFS-31-2018/2019/2020: Sustainable Intensification in Africa

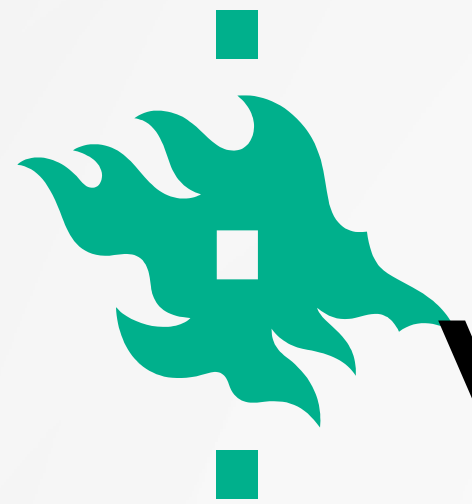
Diversification of agrofood systems (plant-based food)

- Locally-driven
- Plant-based value chains
- Healthier diets and export potential

2020-2024



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 862170



What is InnoFoodAfrica about?

Duration 42 months
Total budget 6.5 Million Euro
Coordinator: VTT Finland



AIM

Create /improve value chains to produce and distribute healthy foods and biopackagings from farms to local and export markets.



WHAT

Demonstrate the potential of indigenous African crops as healthy food ingredients to combat malnutrition of children and pregnant women and adults under the nutrition risk.



HOW

Develop technologies and methods combined with capacity building, communication and business creation to improve farming practices and nutrition, to produce healthy ingredients, food and packagings to reduce loss.

Number and short name		Partner full name	Type	Main Expertise	Number and short name		Partner full name	Type	Main Expertise
	1 VTT	Technical Research Centre of Finland Ltd	RTO			10 OSSREA	Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa	RTO	
	2 UP	University of Pretoria	UNI			11 ARARI	Amhara National Region Agricultural Research Institute	RTO	
	3 NOFIMA	Nofima AS	RTO			12 GUTAGR	Guts Agro Industry Plc	SME	
	4 MAK	Makerere University	UNI			13 AHBFI	Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International	NGO	
	5 IA/INRAE	Institut national d'enseignement supérieur pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et l'environnement	RTO			14 UMA	Uganda Manufacturers Association	NGO	
	6 AAU	Addis Ababa University	UNI			15 FONUS	Food and Nutrition solutions Ltd.	SME	
	7 UH	University of Helsinki	UNI			16 KULIKA	Kulika Uganda	NGO	
	8 CHU	Chuka University	UNI			17 DELPH	Delphius Technologies & Consultancy cc	SME	
	9 UNES	University of Nairobi Enterprises and Services Limited	UNI			18 PUR	Puratos nv/sa	IND	

 Food and biomass processing expertise
  Agriculture expertise
  Dietary and Nutrition expertise
  Consumer, business and social sciences expertise

13 African + European partners

5 Research and technology organisations, 6 Universities, 3 Non-governmental organisations and 4 Private enterprises



13 African partners with local knowledge and on-field expertise



5 EU Partners with forerunning R&D expertise



Multidisciplinary and participatory approach with local actors



4 target East South African countries



Climate-smart local crops

Approach



Consumers and business insights for effective business models

Improved African diets against malnutrition

Improved farming practices focused on local crops

Safe and nutrient food ingredients and products

Side stream valorisation to bio-plastics

Capacity building for local business actors

Technology toolbox and knowledge sharing



Evaluation for 2 business models per country



2 complementary food-based dietary guidelines per country



Pilot actions in 10 participatory farm trainings in 4 countries



>5 new food ingredients and >7 food products



Pilot production for 2 biobased materials



Trainings for trainers and value chain actors



International Innovation Platform

Methodology



Results



New business models and services for the value chain actors

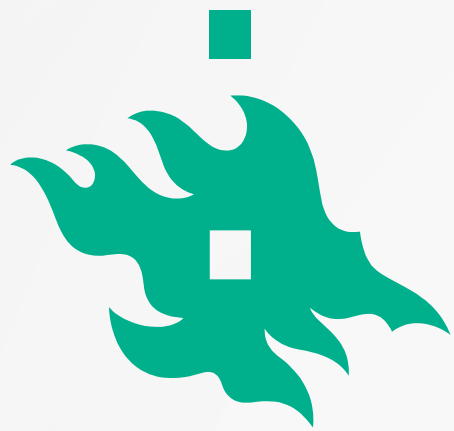
Solutions to fight malnutrition in 10 African cities

Total economic impact ~ 7.5 B€

Empowerment of local actors

Promotion of international cooperation

Impact



HOW WE IMPLEMENTED

WP1

Consumers & business insights for effective business models



WP2

Understanding the nutritional needs

New diet models, implement nutritional recommendations to develop healthy foods



WP3

Improve smallholder farming practises

Training, streamlining seed systems, improving post-harvest technologies to reduce loss



WP7

Efficient coordination, quality assurance and risk management



WP4

Innovative products

Modern food processing technologies



WP5

Convert crop-side streams to packaging materials



WP6

Communicate, transfer knowledge and create awareness of the project outcomes,
IP to engage stakeholders to adopt technologies and practices as well as create international networks by co-operation within FNSSA



INNOFOOD AFRICA: SELECTED CROPS



Bambara ground nut



Cowpea



Faba bean



OFSP



Banana



Finger millet



Sorghum



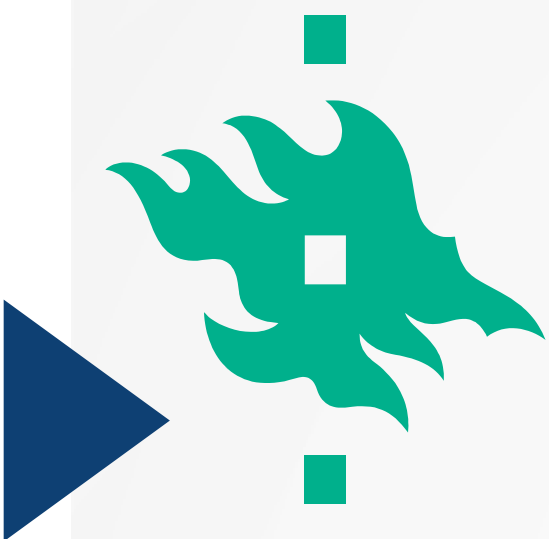
Maize



Amaranth



Teff



WP2 FOOD CONSUMPTION SURVEY



Objectives

- Understanding the food consumption in cities of ET, UG, KE, ZA
- 2 cities from each countries are selected
 - In each city, the consumption of mothers and child pairs (6-23 mo) was assessed
 - Energy and nutrient intakes are being estimated

Sample size: Ethiopia 920; KE 836, UG 780; ZA 800 mothers and children

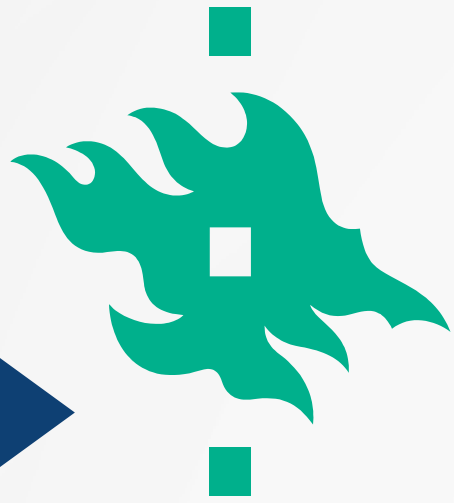
Total sample size: *3336 women and children in 8 cities*

A woman with dark skin and braided hair, wearing a red sleeveless top and a colorful patterned skirt, stands in a field. She is holding a machete in her right hand. The background is a lush green field with trees in the distance.

“Do research with farmers
not for the farmers”

“Smallholder farmer”

Farmer participatory research



COWPEA: CLIMATE SMART AND NUTRITIOUS

Common bean



Cowpea



Vs

Common bean crops suffering from drought stress while the cowpea varieties are proliferating in the same amount of rainfall received (Tharakanithi, Kenya)

UniPID Webinar: AU-EU science collaboration



TECHNOLOGIES TO IMPROVE TECHNOLOGICAL AND SENSORIAL PROPERTIES OF FOOD PROTOTYPES

Dry Fractionation



High-fibre gluten-free crackers

Extrusion



Extruded Sorghum Snack



Protein, fibre and beta-carotene rich snack

Microwave, radio frequency static and agitated retorting



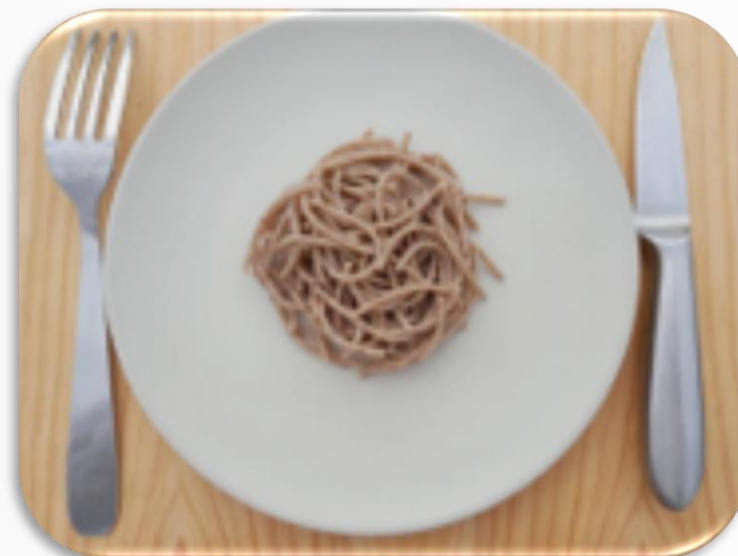
Dehulled sorghum rice



Nutritious porridge for children



Fibre and protein rich pasta



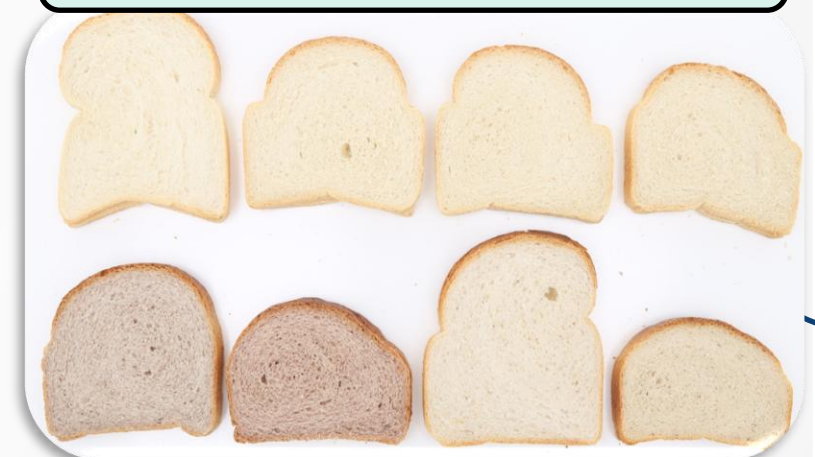
Healthy snacks for children



Quick cooking bambara rice



Bioprocessing



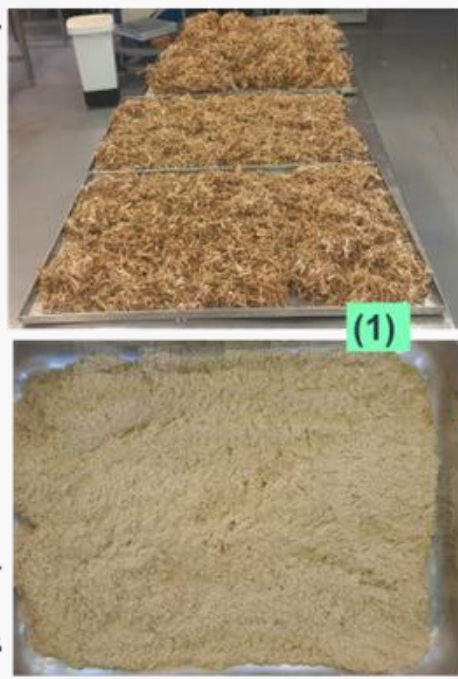
High-fibre bread



PROCESSING OF INJECTION MOULDED BIO-COMPOSITES AND BIO-COMPOSITE FILMS

Mondli Masanabo visiting VTT

Firstly, Cowpea sidestream were milled to less than 500 µm



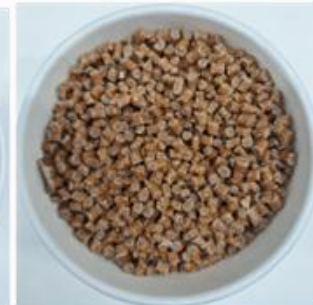
Twin-screw extrusion of PBSA/PHBV blend (85/15) containing 0, 10, 20 and 30 % cowpea lignocellulosic sidestream to produce bio-composite pellets



PBSA/PHBV (85:15)



PBSA/PHBV + 10 % cowpea sidestream



PBSA/PHBV + 20 % cowpea sidestream



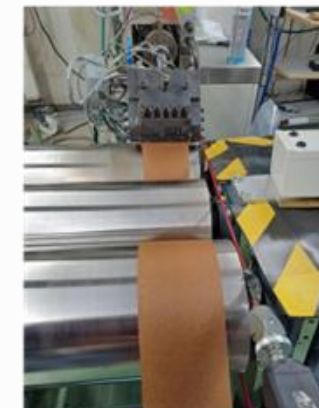
PBSA/PHBV + 30 % cowpea sidestream

(3.1)



Injection molding

(3.2)



Extrusion film casting

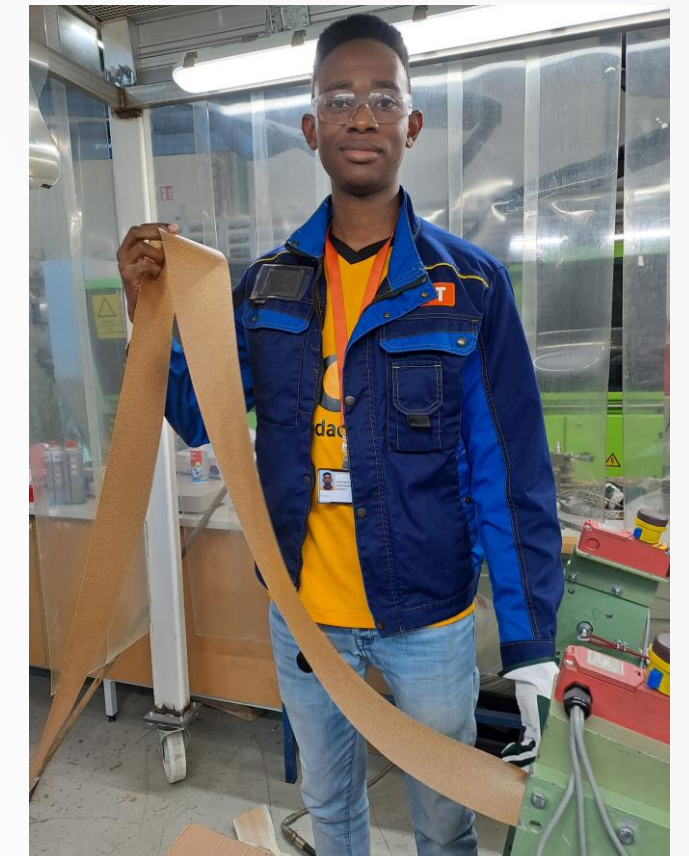


vs



Injection moulded bio-composites and bio-composite films containing 0, 10, 20, 30 % cowpea lignocellulosic sidestream (from left to right)

- Cowpea sidestream milled to less than 500 µm – More finner compared to faba bean sidestream
- Ease in processing
- Led to more uniform materials without visible imperfections, unlike faba bean sidestream



FARM TO FORK

Business models

AGGREGATION

- Coordination
- Market access
- Contract farming

1

FARMING

- Empower SHF
- Good Agricultural practices
- Seed management

2

PROCESING & PACKAGING

- Value addition
- Safe and nutritious
- Sidestreams→Biopackaging

3

DISTRIBUTION

- Availability
- Safety
- Cost

4

RETAIL

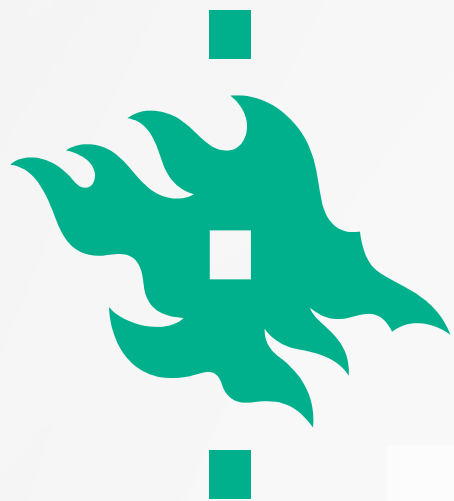
- Availability
- Cost
- Business models

5

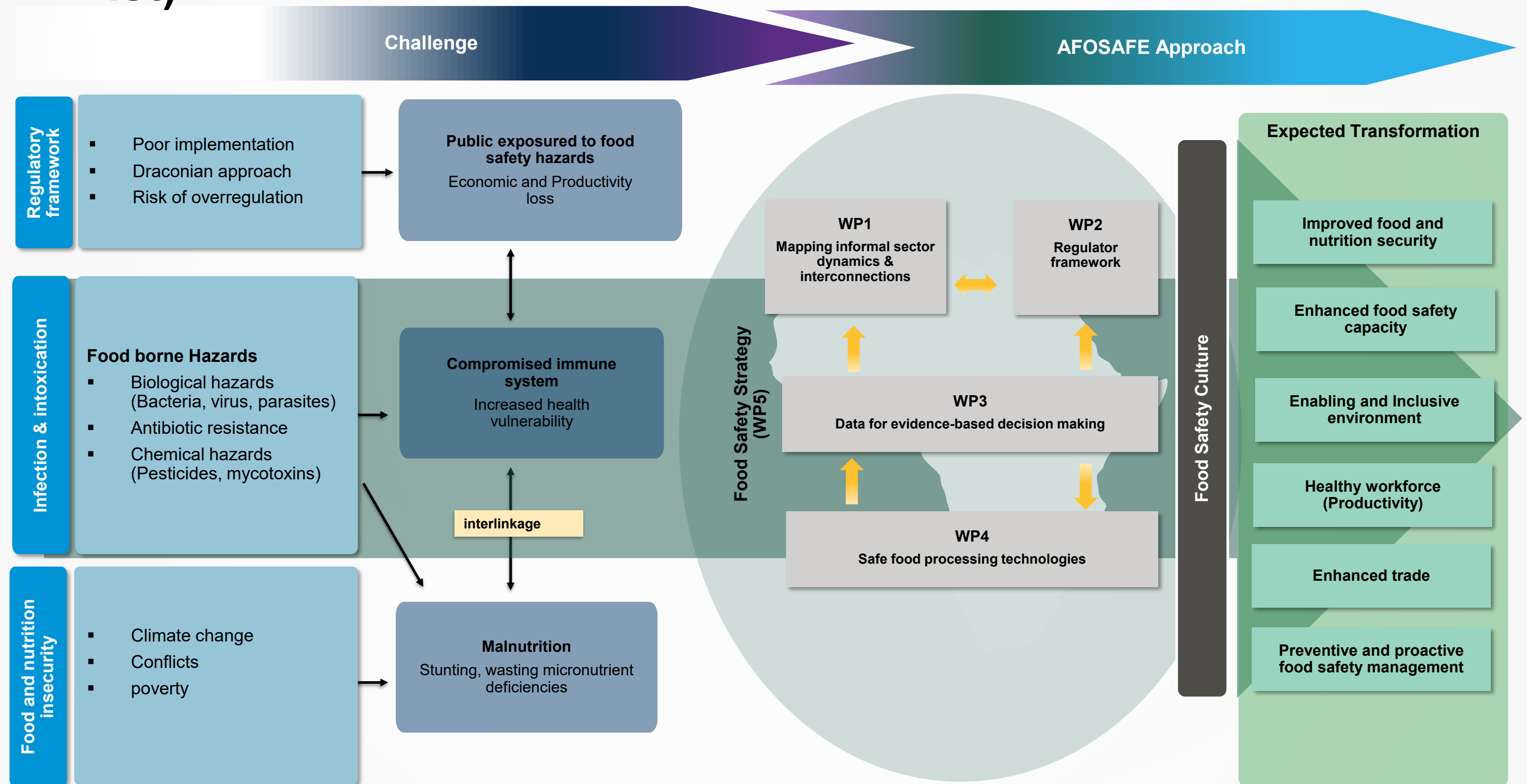
CONSUMERS

- Consumer insights
- Dietary intake
- Health
- Access & Affordability

6



Coordinator: AFOSAFE PROJECT APPLICATION 2023 (Waiting list)



HORIZON-CL6-2023-FARM2FORK: EU-AFRICA UNION – FOOD SAFETY



Coordinator: Nutriloc project application

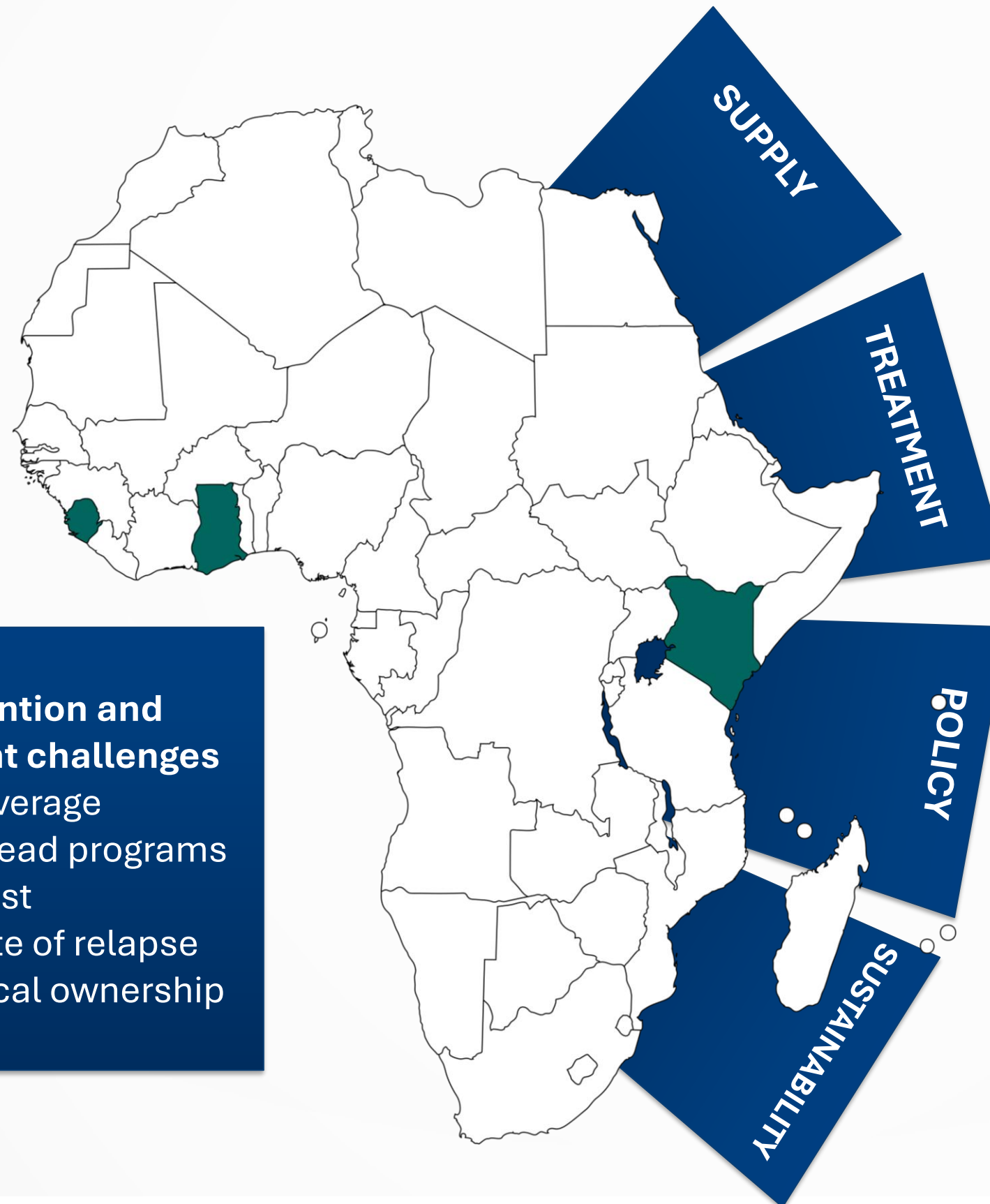
Underlying causes

- Poverty
- Food insecurity
- Unsafe food water,
- Poor hygiene
- Infectious diseases

Child Malnutrition

Prevention and treatment challenges

- Low coverage
- Donor lead programs
- High cost
- High rate of relapse
- Poor local ownership



HORIZON-CL6-2025-02-FARM2FORK-17: Nutrition in emergency situations – Ready-to-use Supplementary Food (RUSF) and Ready-to-use Therapeutic Food



Funded 2026-2030

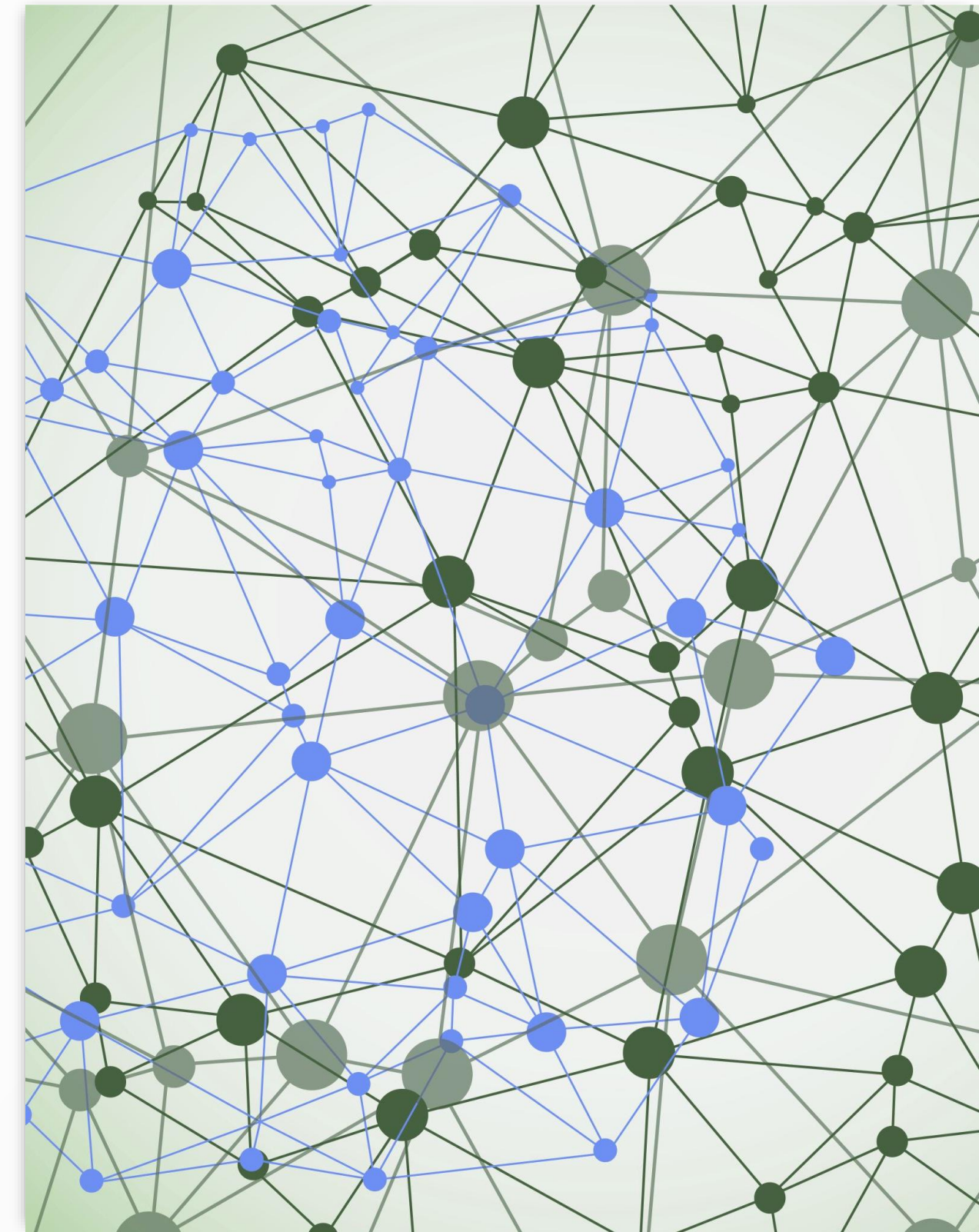


CONCLUSIONS

- **Build long-term partnerships:** Meaningful collaboration takes time and continuous commitment. (local development funding or join different consortiums and forums)
- **Ensure inclusivity:** Engage partners across the entire research cycle.
- **Use participatory approaches:** Capture complex realities through stakeholder involvement.
- **Embed research locally:** Align with local contexts, priorities, and needs.
- **Focus on scalable solutions:** both short-term and long-term impact.
- **Recognize multiple impact pathways:** Different outcomes can coexist and reinforce each other.
- **Anticipate challenges:** Plan proactively for potential barriers.

Common Challenges

- Limited local infrastructure may delay implementation.
- Unrealistic expectations among partners or stakeholders.
- Political and policy changes affecting project continuity.





Food and Nutrition department UH



Prof Kati Katina

Crop Science



Prof. Fred Stoddard

Dr. Kiflemariam Belachew



Dos. Rossana Coda

Dr Youngsun Lee



Dr Hanna Koivula

MSc. Jenna Lemmetty

Nutrition



Prof Anne-Maria Pajari



Prof Mikael Fogelholm



Dr. Noora Kanerva



Dr. Liisa Korkalo



All international partners



Funding



Horizon 2020
European Union Funding
for Research & Innovation



With support from
Finland's development
cooperation



FINNISH NATIONAL
AGENCY FOR EDUCATION

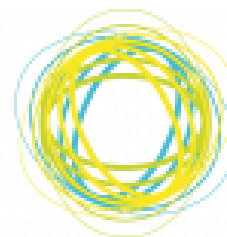
Johanna Hakala

Research Council of Finland

Johanna Hakala, PhD, is a Finnish higher education and science administration professional. She previously worked as a researcher and served as Head of Research Development at the University of Tampere. Since 2015, she has worked at the Research Council of Finland, specializing in international research collaboration and open science policy.



PANELIST



The top half of the image features a close-up of an owl's face on the left, with its distinctive orange eyes and brown and white feathers. To the right of the owl is the logo of the Research Council of Finland, which consists of a white triangle with a black curved line inside. Below these elements, the text "Research Council of Finland" is written in a white, sans-serif font.

Research Council of Finland

UniPID AU-EU STI cooperation webinar Research funder perspective

25 August, 2026
Johanna Hakala

**We open up new avenues for
excellent, responsible and
high-impact research**



RCF Policy for Promoting Internationalisation 2030

- We support international cooperation and mobility through our basic funding instruments.
- We engage in collaboration with funding agencies: the Nordic countries and EU partnerships, as well as strategically selected non-EU partners.
- We influence EU and Nordic RDI programmes and strengthen success in EU funding calls.
- We promote the internationalisation of Finnish research environments and competence clusters.
- We fund international research infrastructures.
- We enhance the visibility and responsibility of Finnish research.



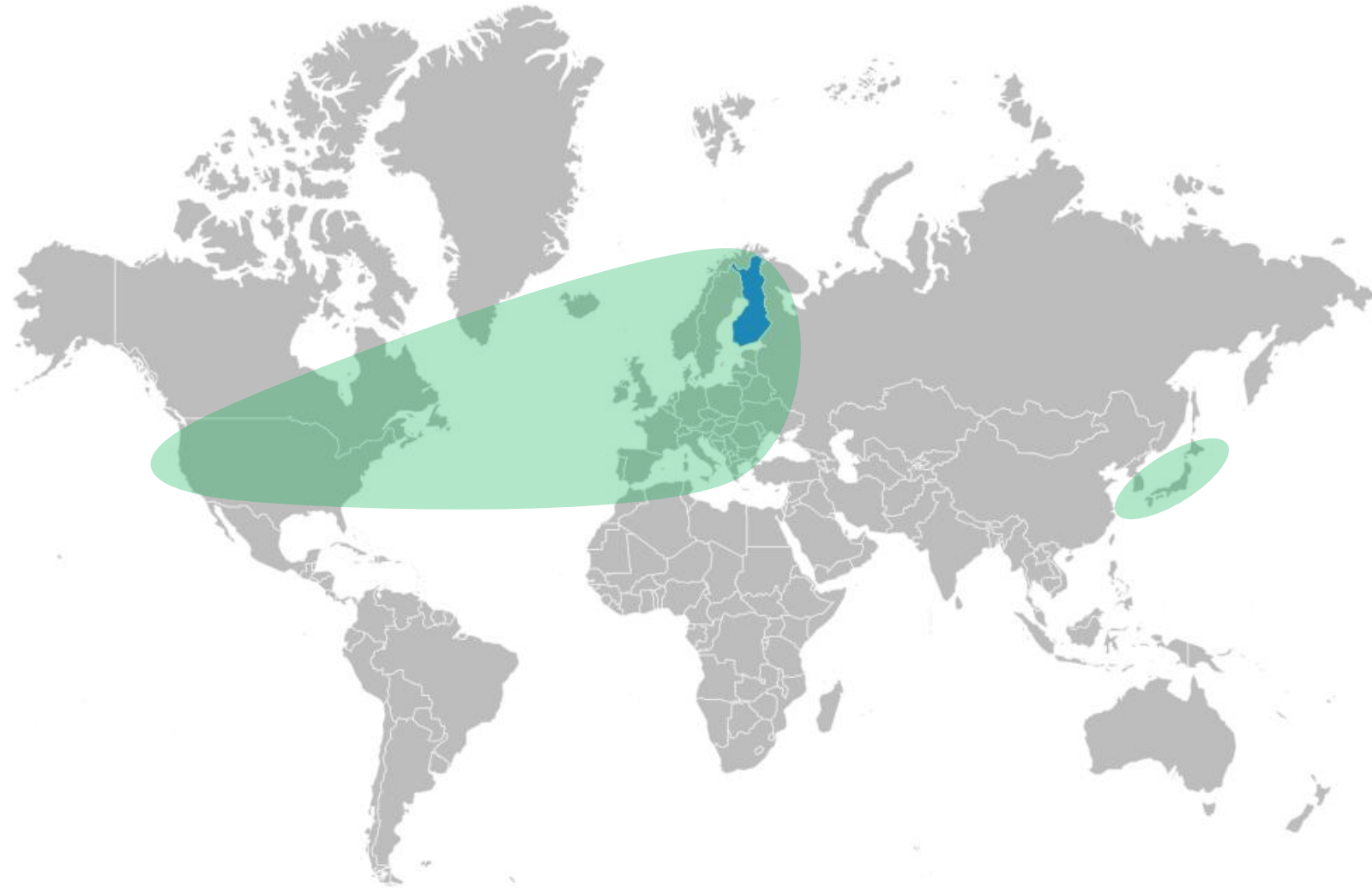
RCF subcommittee for International Research Cooperation

- The Board of the Research Council of Finland (RCF) established the subcommittee in February 2025.
- The subcommittee assesses the funding needs for international collaboration programmes and calls



RCF's international partnerships

- Global partnerships
- European cooperation
- Nordic cooperation



RCF perspectives on EU-Africa cooperation: Horizon Europe (1/2)

- RCF overall view on INCO in Horizon Europe
 - RCF supports strong international cooperation while safeguarding research security and integrity
 - The association of non-European countries to the FP, as well as participation in EU R&I partnerships, are effective ways to promote such collaboration.
 - The same applies to HE Cluster calls involving selected regions or countries (e.g. Cluster 6 has had several calls including cooperation with Africa)
- RCF represents Finland in several Horizon Europe programme committees and acts as a National Contact Point (Pillar 1 and some of the P2 clusters)

RCF perspectives on EU-Africa cooperation: Horizon Europe (2/2)

- RCF is involved in seven Horizon Europe Co-funded Partnerships + four in the pipeline
 - Of these, South-Africa is a partner in One Health AMR, PerMedWater4All, Sustainable Blue Economy, Biodiversa+ and Raw Materials. Tunisia is a partner in W4A, SBE and Biodiversa+. Marocco is a partner in Biodiversa+.
 - Please note: funder participation differs between calls.
 - <https://www.aka.fi/en/from-research-to-society/rcf-impact/international-cooperation/european-cooperation/>

(RCF has previously funded LEAP ERA-Net calls and EDCTP-JPI)

Other routes for FI-Africa cooperation supported by RCF

- All RCF projects can budget for international cooperation that is relevant for the objectives of the research
 - However, funding cannot be provided to organizations outside Finland
- RCF funds multilateral calls beyond the EU framework, in which African countries may be involved
 - Recent example: both RCF and S-A NRF funded the Transatlantic Platform call "Preparing for Tomorrow" (call closed in summer 2026)
- African researchers can participate in [COST-networks](#); RCF acts as the national coordinator for COST
- RCF funds the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis ([IIASA](#)), a research institute focused on global challenges. IIASA researchers have multiple (EU and non-EU) projects with African partners.

Eevi Laukkanen

University of Eastern Finland

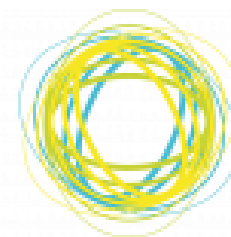
Eevi Laukkanen is a Research Manager in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies at the University of Eastern Finland, where she assists researchers in engaging with international funding programmes, in particular Horizon Europe and associated EU programmes.

For profile/more information:

<https://uefconnect.uef.fi/en/person/eevi.laukkanen/>



PANELIST





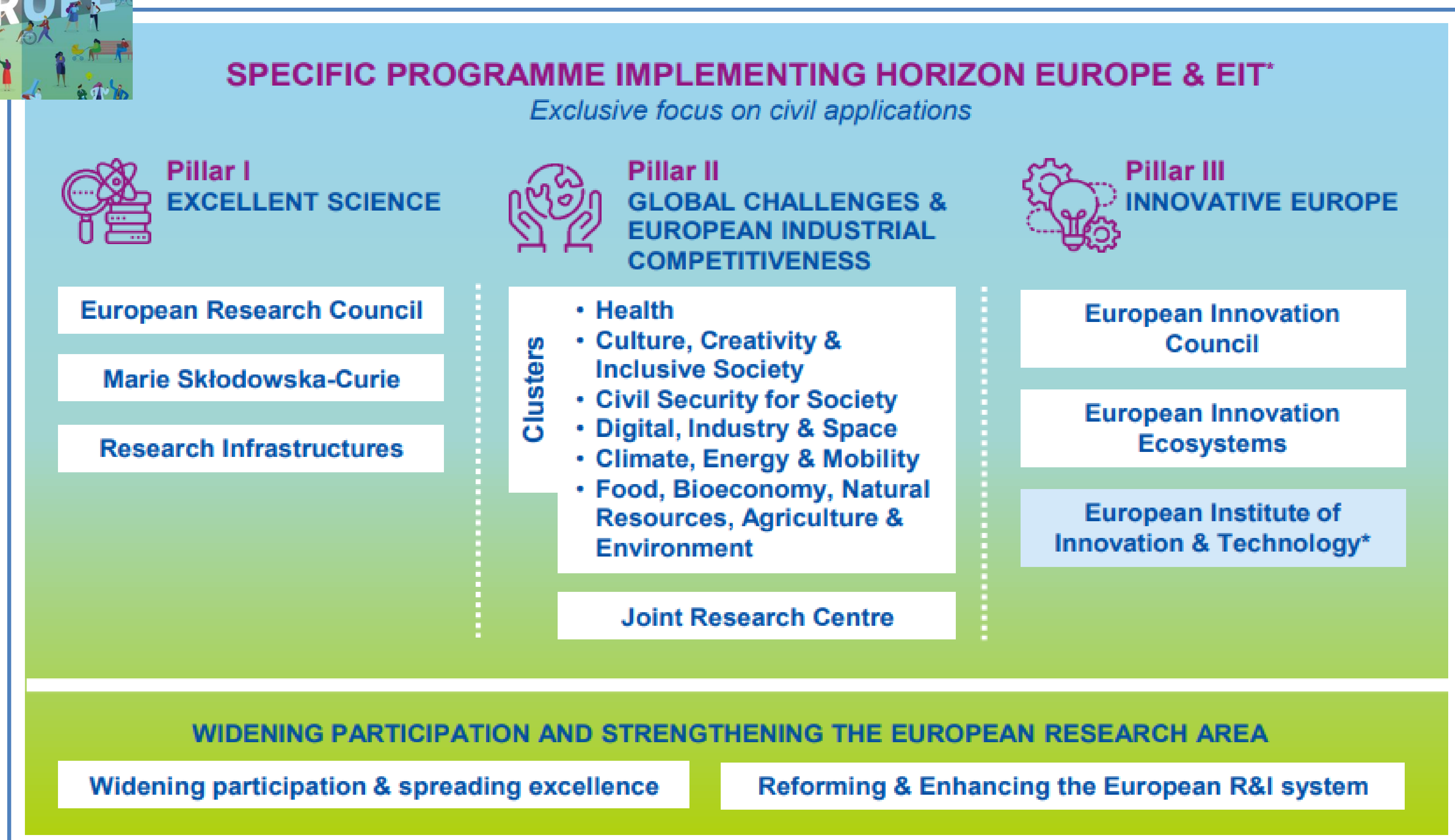
Upcoming Horizon Europe calls under Africa Initiative IV

UniPID Webinar: AU-EU science, technology and innovation collaboration for Finnish universities, 25 August 2026

Eevi Laukkanen, Research Manager, Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies, University of Eastern Finland



– the EU funding programme for research and innovation 2021 - 2027





Who is eligible for funding from Horizon Europe?

To be eligible for funding (i.e. to become a 'beneficiary'), legal entities must be established in:

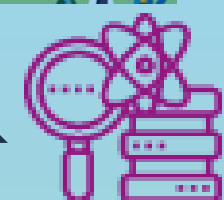
- One of the **EU Member States**, or
- **Associated Countries (AC)** to Horizon Europe:
 - Albania, Armenia, Australia* (from 1.1.2027) Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada*, **Egypt**, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Japan*, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, New Zealand*, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Korea*, Serbia, Switzerland, **Tunisia**, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom. *(Those marked with * are associated to Pillar II only)*, or
- **Low and Middle-income countries** (other third countries), as listed in: [list-3rd-country-participation horizon-euratom en.pdf](#)
 - Includes all countries in Africa that are not AC
- Researchers and innovators of **any nationality** can participate and apply for grants (mobility rules may apply for individual grants)





SPECIFIC PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE & EIT*

Exclusive focus on civil applications



Pillar I EXCELLENT SCIENCE

European Research Council

Marie Skłodowska-Curie

Research Infrastructures

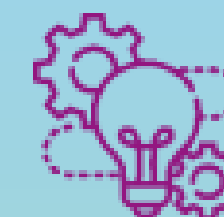


Pillar II GLOBAL CHALLENGES & EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS

Clusters

- Health
- Culture, Creativity & Inclusive Society
- Civil Security for Society
- Digital, Industry & Space
- Climate, Energy & Mobility
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture & Environment

Joint Research Centre



Pillar III INNOVATIVE EUROPE

European Innovation
Council

European Innovation
Ecosystems

European Institute of
Innovation & Technology*

WIDENING PARTICIPATION AND STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA

Widening participation & spreading excellence

Reforming & Enhancing the European R&I system

'BOTTOM UP'



Horizon Europe Pillar I – Excellent Science: Options for EU/AC collaboration for/with researchers/institutions in Africa

European Research Council (ERC)	Funding instrument	Options for Researchers / Organisations from the AU
	Starting Grant (0-10 years post-PhD) Consolidator Grant (5-15 years post-PhD) Advanced Grant	Principal Investigator (PI) when applying through host institution in the EU/Associated Country (AC)
	Synergy Grant (Project by 2-4 PIs)	One of the PIs can be hosted full-time by an institution outside of the EU/AC
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)	Funding instrument	Options for Researchers / Organisations from the AU
	Postdoctoral Fellowships (0-8 years post-PhD)	European Fellowship: Fellow when host institution in an institution in the EU/AC Global Fellowship: Host institution for Fellow's outgoing phase Both: Associated partner to host Fellow's secondment and/or placement
	Doctoral Networks	Recruiting beneficiary organisation, if organisations from min. 3 EU/AC in the consortium Recruited researchers can be of any nationality (mobility rule applies) Associated partner organisation to host researchers on secondments
	Staff Exchange	Beneficiary organisation, if organisations from min. 2 EU/AC in the consortium to send and receive researchers on secondments to/from EU/AC organisations
	COFUND	Beneficiary organisation has to be in the EU/AC Associated partner organisation to host researchers on secondments Recruited researchers can be of any nationality (mobility rule applies)

ERC & MSCA links

ERC website <https://erc.europa.eu/>

- Previously funded ERC projects and their abstracts: [ERC dashboard](#)
- Instructional videos by ERC: [ERC Classes](#)

Links to funded ERC proposals (or tips) found on the internet:

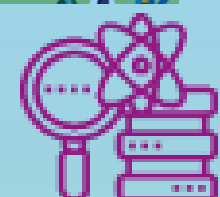
- <https://www.ffg.at/europa/heu/erc/published-proposals>
- <https://jorgencarling.org/2019/12/09/erc-cv-and-track-record/>
- <https://janierola.net/2019/09/21/erc-winning-recipe-in-ssh-fields/>
- <https://www.fb03.uni-frankfurt.de/146338966.pdf>

- [MSCA Work Programme 2026-2027](#) (pdf)
- Overview of the **MSCA schemes and links**: <https://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/actions>
- **MSCA National Contact Point** network
Radiance resources:
<https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/msca>
- **MSCA Handbooks** (super thorough!):
<https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/store/handbooks-msca>



SPECIFIC PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE & EIT*

Exclusive focus on civil applications



Pillar I EXCELLENT SCIENCE

European Research Council

Marie Skłodowska-Curie

Research Infrastructures

The EC defines the topics

You need to match your idea with available topics

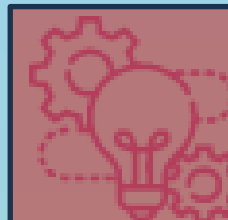


Pillar II GLOBAL CHALLENGES & EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS

Clusters

- Health
- Culture, Creativity & Inclusive Society
- Civil Security for Society
- Digital, Industry & Space
- Climate, Energy & Mobility
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture & Environment

Joint Research Centre



Pillar III INNOVATIVE EUROPE

European Innovation Council

European Innovation Ecosystems

European Institute of Innovation & Technology*

WIDENING PARTICIPATION AND STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA

Widening participation & spreading excellence

Reforming & Enhancing the European R&I system



Horizon Europe Pillar II – Work Programmes 2026-2027

Links to 2026-2027 work programmes

[Cluster 1 – Health](#)

[Cluster 2 – Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society](#)

[Cluster 3 – Civil Security for Society](#)

[Cluster 4 – Digital, Industry and Space](#)

[Cluster 5 – Climate, Energy and Mobility](#)

[Cluster 6 – Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment](#)

[Missions \(Adaptation to Climate Change, Cancer, 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart cities; Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030; A Soil Deal for Europe\)](#)

Horizon Europe Pillar II call topics: a '3-tier' positioning for AU participation

'Expected' **Specific Africa focus**

- Call topic clearly requires participation from organisations in Africa
- Referenced under Africa Initiative IV

'Encouraged' **International cooperation emphasis**

- Call topic has no specific 'Africa' focus but international cooperation is encouraged (i.e. participation from outside the EU, incl. Africa)
- Referenced under Africa Initiative IV

'Can' **Open to all**

- Call topic does not reference international cooperation but standard eligibility rules apply (i.e. EU, AC, LMIC eligible for funding)



SHARE PRINT

Horizon Europe launches Africa Initiative IV under the 2026–2027 work programme

03.02.2026 Press and information team of the Delegation to the African Union

The European Commission has launched **Africa Initiative IV** under the **Horizon Europe work programme 2026–2027**, allocating **approximately €605.45 million** to support EU–Africa cooperation in research and innovation (R&I).



[Horizon Europe launches Africa Initiative IV under the 2026–2027 work programme | EEAS](#)

Find the Africa Initiative IV calls listed below.

Action ID	Topic title
HORIZON-HLTH-2026-01-ENVHLTH-01	Towards a better understanding and anticipation of the combined effects of climate change or
HORIZON-HLTH-2026-01-DISEASE-04	Development of novel vaccines for viral pathogens with epidemic potential
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-05	Development of novel small molecule antiviral therapeutics for pathogens with epidemic poter
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-06	Development of monoclonal antibodies to prevent and treat infections from Flaviviruses
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-07	Development of monoclonal antibodies to prevent and treat infections from Filo-, Nairo-, Phen Toga viruses
HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-08	Development of innovative antimicrobials against pathogens resistant to antimicrobials
HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-HERITAGE-05	Creative alliances: Fostering global partnerships in cultural policies and CCI innovation
HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-DEMOCRACY-08	Global Human Rights and EU values
HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-DEMOCRACY-05	Development aid and democratic governance
HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-DEMOCRACY-02	Understanding the forms of local democracy in low-income and low-middle income countries
HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-DEMOCRACY-07	Supporting post-conflict democracy and reconstruction
HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-HERITAGE-06	Future-proofing sustainable cultural tourism

Horizon Europe Pillar II – Action types

Research & Innovation Actions (RIA)

Funding rate 100%

Producing new information or technology
Supporting research and development activities

Coordination and Support Actions (CSA)

Funding rate 100%

Coordinate, support and activate research
(~~ networks, platforms, preparatory work)

Innovation Actions (IA)

Funding rate 70% /
Non-profit (incl. HEIs) 100%

Producing new or improved products or services
Supporting actions closer to the market (e.g. prototypes, demonstrators, pilots)

Pre-commercial Procurement (PCP)

Funding rate 90%
No near-to-the-market solutions available,
New R&I needed

Public Procurement of Innovative Solutions (PPI)

Funding rate 35%
Nearly or in small quantity on the market,
R&I still required to de-risk

NOTE e.g.: HORIZON-CL5-2027-01-D1-11: Africa-EU CO-FUND action on climate → Researchers / universities cannot apply to **Programme Cofund Action** type of calls

Africa Initiative IV – 2027 call topics

Cluster 1: Health

Call deadline: 13 April 2027

'Encouraged'

Development of novel small molecule antiviral therapeutics for pathogens with epidemic potential

HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-05

RIA, €9-11m, 5 projects

Development of monoclonal antibodies to prevent and treat infections from Flaviviruses

HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-06

RIA, €9-10m, 4 projects

Development of innovative antimicrobials against pathogens resistant to antimicrobials

HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-08

RIA, €8-10m, 5 projects

Development of monoclonal antibodies to prevent and treat infections from Filo-, Nairo-, Phenui-, Picorna- and Toga viruses

HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-07

RIA, €9-10m, 4 projects

“Participation of **third countries** where viruses / AMR bacteria and fungi addressed in the proposal are **endemic or where outbreaks have occurred or are ongoing** is **encouraged**.”

In the area of EU-Africa Health,
note also: [Global Health EDCTP3](#)



Global Health
EDCTP3

Global Health EDCTP3 (European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership 3) is an EU Institutionalised Partnership under **Horizon Europe**, bringing together European and African countries to address infectious diseases with a major burden in sub-Saharan Africa.

Global Health EDCTP3 funds:

- Collaborative research and innovation projects on **HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, neglected tropical diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and emerging/re-emerging infectious diseases.**
- Clinical trials and late-stage clinical development⁶⁸ of vaccines, medicines and diagnostics, as well as implementation research and epidemic preparedness activities.
- Research capacity strengthening, clinical trial networks, fellowships, training, ethics and regulatory capacity development in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Funding is available to legal entities from EU/AC and Sub-Saharan African countries that are members of the [EDCTP Association](#)
- Calls are organised by annual Work Programmes (2027 tbc), for more info: https://www.global-health-edctp3.europa.eu/funding/how-apply-funding_en

Africa Initiative IV – 2027 call topics

Cluster 2: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society, 1/3

Call deadline: 23 September 2027

'Encouraged'

Development aid and democratic governance

HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-DEMOCRACY-05

Research and Innovation Action, €3.5-4m, 3 projects

Address the complexities and challenges of the **relations between the EU and low- and middle-income countries** and increase their intelligence to develop EU strategies and policies that promote a more inclusive and equitable multilateralism. Enhance the capacity of development organisations and their solutions to support democratic institutions and address key global challenges, such as climate action, democracy and rule of law, human rights and gender equality. Strengthen multilateral partnerships between the EU as a donor of development aid and low- and middle-income countries in the field of development cooperation.

“The geographical scope of this research includes the EU Enlargement, Neighbourhood and **low- and lower middle-income countries**, with a focus on the relationship of these with the EU. Therefore, **international cooperation is strongly encouraged.**”

Africa Initiative IV – 2027 call topics

Cluster 2: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society, 2/3

Call deadline: 23 September 2027

Global Human Rights and EU values

HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-DEMOCRACY-08

Research and Innovation Action, €3.5-4m, 3 projects

'Encouraged'

As outcomes, the EU and national policymakers strengthen global human rights and gender equality through effective international crime accountability mechanisms and cooperation frameworks for humanitarian assistance, security, and respect for international law.

Organisations in the EU Enlargement, Neighbourhood and LMIC countries empower vulnerable groups through stronger capacity, partnerships, human right advocacy, service delivery and reporting of human rights abuses.

EU and national policymakers integrate human rights considerations in trade policies agreements, supply chains, and labour standards promote dignity, equality, fairness and well-being, and prevent abuses.

"The geographical scope of this research should include the **EU Neighbourhood and low- and lower middle-income countries** [e.g. North Africa], with a focus on the Western Balkan and the accession countries.

International cooperation is strongly encouraged."

Africa Initiative IV – 2027 call topics

Cluster 2: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society, 3/3

Call deadline: 23 September 2027

'Encouraged'

Future-proofing sustainable cultural tourism

HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-HERITAGE-06

Research and Innovation Action, €4-4.8M, 3 projects

Evidence-based policy recommendations and solutions for **integrating cultural tourism into strategies for regenerative sustainability**, environmental protection (for example, from degradation or biodiversity loss), digital transformation, social inclusion and gender equality at all levels of government. As a result, cultural tourism becomes a stronger driver of regenerative sustainable development, increases workforce numbers and skills, and improves working conditions.

Call has 2 alternative focus areas:

Focus 2 – Cultural tourism as a catalyst for sustainable local development

"Proposals are expected to develop sustainable cultural tourism frameworks and strategies tailored to emerging and less-developed destinations, especially in low-income and lesser-known regions [...]

Partnerships with non-EU countries are encouraged."

Africa Initiative IV – 2027 call topics

Cluster 4: Digital, Industry and Space, 1/2

Call deadline: 18 March 2027

'Expected'

International cooperation in AI

HORIZON-CL4-2027-04-DIGITAL-EMERGING-06

Innovation Action, €1.5m, 2 projects

Project results are expected to contribute to one of the following outcomes:

- Faster uptake of tailored and enhanced AI solutions **at innovation hubs in LMIC** by training and optimising them with local data and applied research.
 - Easier large-scale deployment of **local AI solutions in LMIC** by increasing the efficiency of system demonstration in relevant, operational environments.
 - Strengthened local innovation ecosystems that foster sustainable socio-economic impact by addressing key societal challenges in education, healthcare, agriculture, and/or environmental sustainability.
- “[...]The proposals must support digital partnerships and **international digital cooperation** to promote an approach to AI that enhances human well-being and societal progress [...] training and optimisation of existing AI algorithms developed in initiatives like AI for Public Good and **GenAI for Africa** [...] Capitalise from existing EU initiatives like the **call GenAI for Africa from HE WP25**, the **Global Gateway**, and **Smart Africa** to up-scale the deployment of solutions in low-income countries.”

Africa Initiative IV – 2027 call topics

Cluster 4: Digital, Industry and Space, 2/2

Call deadline: 2 February 2027

'Encouraged'

Technologies for innovative processing of raw materials

HORIZON-CL4-2027-01-MAT-PROD-16

Innovation Action, €10-12.5m, 4 projects

Increased recovery rates of valuable raw materials, particularly critical raw materials from low grade or complex ores and/or from mining waste;

Increased economic performance in terms of higher material-, water-, energy- and cost-efficiency and flexibility in minerals processing and metallurgical processes; and

Improved health, safety and environmental performance of the operations throughout the whole life cycle that is considered, including a reduction in waste, wastewater and generation of emissions of air pollutants and a better recovery of resources from generated waste, reducing the environmental footprint and contributing to biodiversity and ecosystems preservation.

“International cooperation is encouraged with **countries with which the EU has signed Strategic Partnerships on raw materials** [incl. South Africa, Rwanda, DRC, Zambia, Namibia], especially with Ukraine.”

Africa Initiative IV – 2027 call topics

Cluster 5: Climate, Energy and Mobility, 1/3

Call deadline: 31 March 2027

'Expected'

Renewable Energy Valleys in Africa to increase energy security and energy access in Africa

HORIZON-CL5-2027-02-D3-10

Innovation Action, €4.5m, 2 projects

Increase the roll-out of local or regional renewable energy system solutions for electricity, heat and fuel needs and contribute to a **fair trade between Africa and Europe**.

Strengthen the joint **EU-AU Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Collaborative Partnership** efforts.

Increase the readiness, reliability, performance and affordability of **local or regional renewable energy system solutions in Africa**.

”The action should cover either **urbanised or rural contexts in Africa**. [...] **African SMEs** are expected to play an important role in the overall value chain and to contribute in identifying the needs. [...] As the **demonstration installation will be located in Africa**, relevant **African partners have to participate** in the implementation of the project. **A balanced involvement** in the activities of the projects of European and African partners will be considered an asset in the evaluation.”

Africa Initiative IV – 2027 call topics

Cluster 5: Climate, Energy and Mobility 2/3

Call deadline: 4 March 2027

'Encouraged'

Advancing understanding, modelling and prediction of extreme events in a changing climate

HORIZON-CL5-2027-01-D1-07

Research and Innovation Action, €6m, 3 projects

Improved understanding of past and present extreme events in the context of climate change in Europe and globally, as well as the interaction between different hazards, their cumulative and/or cascading effects. Enhanced prediction and projection modelling for extreme events.

“Cooperation with global, EU, national and regional actors in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction and climate adaptation, including through integration into or interoperability with Copernicus, Destination Earth and other relevant initiatives is encouraged. In addition, **international cooperation with low- to middle-income countries automatically eligible for Horizon Europe funding is encouraged** in support of climate resilience efforts, **especially for capacity building.**”

Africa Initiative IV – 2027 call topics

Cluster 5: Climate, Energy and Mobility 3/3

Call deadline: 4 March 2027

'Encouraged'

Better understanding and attribution of land and ocean carbon sources and sinks

HORIZON-CL5-2027-01-D1-12

Research and Innovation Action, €5m, 5 projects

Project results are expected to contribute to some of the following expected outcomes:

- Better understanding of oceanic carbon dioxide (CO₂) sources and sinks, their drivers and dynamics under different climate scenarios, including their responses to human interventions;
 - Better understanding of land ecosystem CO₂ sources and sinks, their drivers (both natural and anthropogenic) and their evolution under future climate and land-based mitigation scenarios;
- Progress on reconciling estimates of anthropogenic CO₂ emissions and removals from land originating from the climate science and national emissions reporting communities;
 - More consistent representation and quantification of lateral transfers of carbon.

“International cooperation is generally encouraged, in particular with low and lower/upper-middle-income countries.”

Africa Initiative IV – 2027 call topics

Cluster 6: Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment

Call deadline: 8 April 2027

'Expected'

Optimising the water-nutrient-energy nexus for sustainable and climate smart agriculture in Africa (FNSSA)

HORIZON-CL6-2027-02-FARM2FORK-02-two-stage
Research and Innovation Action, €6m, 2 projects

Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- agricultural actors implement sustainable practices for resource-efficient and climate-smart and biodiversity-friendly farming in diverse African agro-ecosystems;
- integrated water, nutrient and energy management systems are available to smallholder farms in Africa.

*"Proposals should enable sustainable, circular, climate-smart and biodiversity friendly practices at farm level while considering the characteristic of both local and regional levels **in at least two different African agro-ecosystems**. [...] Proposals must implement the multi-actor approach to ensure the adequate involvement of the public authorities, advisory services and farmer organisations."*



European
Commission

EU Funding & Tenders Portal

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EN



H...

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Search...



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Calls for proposals

Participant register

Partner search

EU programmes

Funding updates

Discover opportunities

Horizon4Ukraine

Find out how to participate by following these key steps.

Find calls for proposals

Explore the available EU funding opportunities by searching for calls for

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/calls-for-proposals>

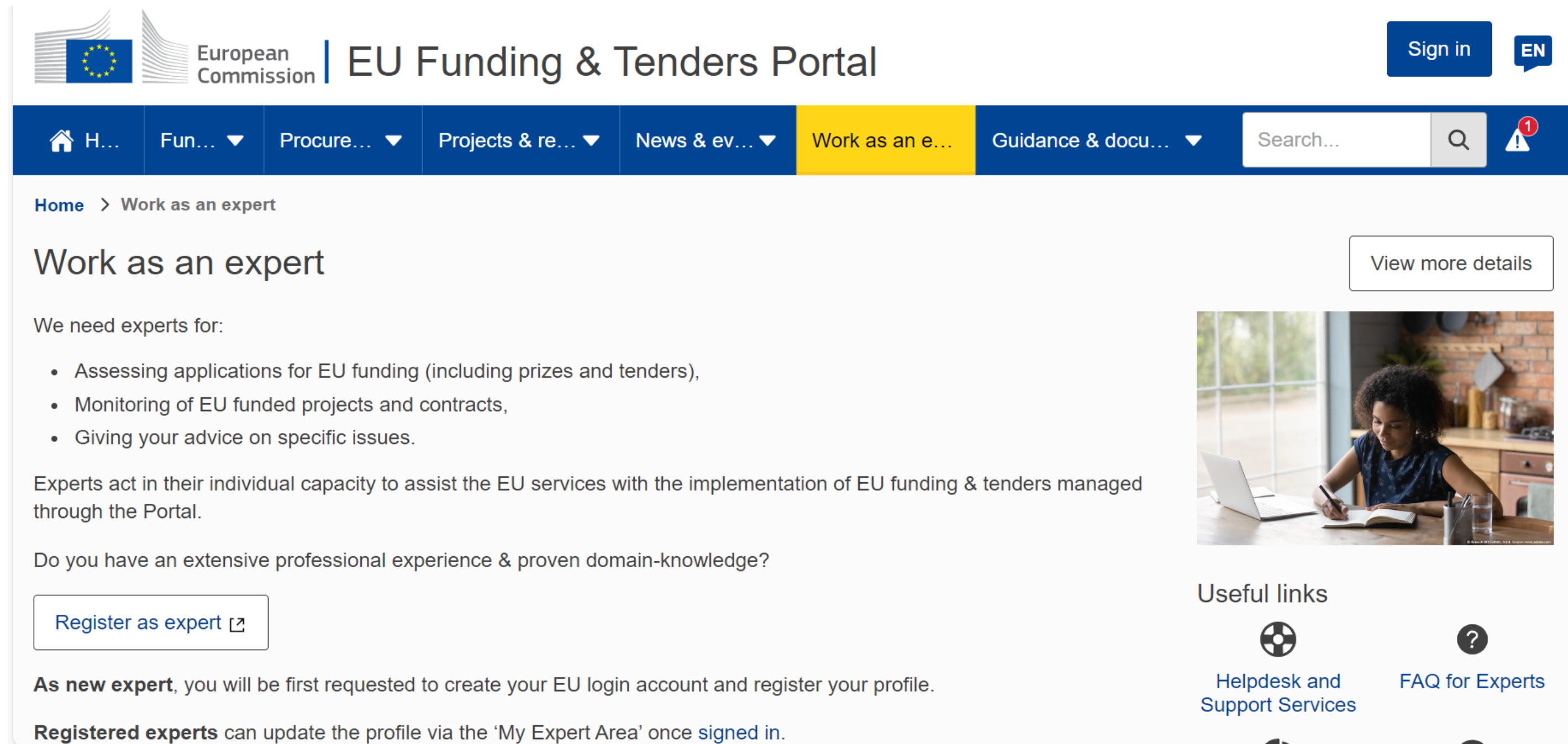
Find calls for tenders

Find business opportunities in the calls for tenders managed by EU institutions, bodies and agencies.

EU-AU collaboration in Horizon Europe projects – some practical considerations

- When setting up the consortium, think of organisations that help reach objectives and solve problems – diversity, complementarity, experience, geographical coverage
 - R&I partners: Have a track record and reputation for doing research in the field
 - Stakeholder/Use case/Other partners: Relevance, commitment and ability to contribute
 - All partner organisations: Capacity to contract, project manage, report and administer the funding
- Without a network Horizon is an impossible area – use and grow your networks and include your AU colleagues
- High-profile academics in ‘leading’ AU universities are in very high demand; there are many excellent academics in AU who do not have such a high international profile – network to find them and ideally develop sustained collaborations beyond a single project
- Ensure research is co-designed as well as co-produced and that all partners benefit and research is not extractive
- Beware of high teaching loads at AU universities and that many academics do not have protected research time
- Clarify roles early on – collaborating with an institution (beneficiary partner) or an individual (service contract)
- Consult your university’s professional services (research, finance, legal) early on – call analysis and scope, funding options, partner due diligence etc. – and connect them with your AU partner institution, if necessary

The EC needs you! – Getting involved as an evaluator



The screenshot shows the 'EU Funding & Tenders Portal' header with the European Commission logo. The navigation bar includes links for Home, Funding, Procurement, Projects & results, News & events, Work as an expert (highlighted in yellow), and Guidance & documents. A search bar and a notification icon are also present. The main content area is titled 'Work as an expert' and includes a 'View more details' button. It lists the reasons for needing experts: assessing applications, monitoring projects, and giving advice. It also states that experts act in their individual capacity to assist EU services. A question asks if the user has extensive professional experience and proven domain-knowledge. A 'Register as expert' button is provided. Below this, it says 'As new expert, you will be first requested to create your EU login account and register your profile.' and 'Registered experts can update the profile via the 'My Expert Area' once signed in.' On the right side, there is a photo of a woman working on a laptop and a section titled 'Useful links' with icons for 'Helpdesk and Support Services' and 'FAQ for Experts'.

European Commission | EU Funding & Tenders Portal

Sign in EN

Home > Work as an expert

Work as an expert

View more details

We need experts for:

- Assessing applications for EU funding (including prizes and tenders),
- Monitoring of EU funded projects and contracts,
- Giving your advice on specific issues.

Experts act in their individual capacity to assist the EU services with the implementation of EU funding & tenders managed through the Portal.

Do you have an extensive professional experience & proven domain-knowledge?

[Register as expert](#)

As new expert, you will be first requested to create your EU login account and register your profile.

Registered experts can update the profile via the 'My Expert Area' once signed in.

Useful links

- [Helpdesk and Support Services](#)
- [FAQ for Experts](#)

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/work-as-an-expert>





UNIVERSITY OF
EASTERN FINLAND

⁸¹
Thank you!

uef.fi



Saara Harjula

University of Helsinki

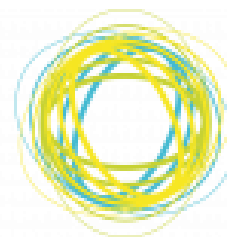
Saara Harjula is the EU Liaison Manager at the University of Helsinki, responsible for the university's advocacy in EU policy and relations with decision-makers. She has 20 years of professional experience in Brussels and previously served as Deputy Director of the Helsinki EU Office, where she led advocacy work on behalf of universities in the Helsinki metropolitan area.

Earlier in her career, Harjula worked at Finland's Permanent Representation to the EU, focusing on research and innovation as well as social and health policy. She has also worked at Universities Finland (UNIFI), coordinating collaboration and advocacy related to RDI policy for Finnish universities.

Harjula holds a master's degree in Social Sciences from the University of Helsinki and a master's degree in European law from Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB).

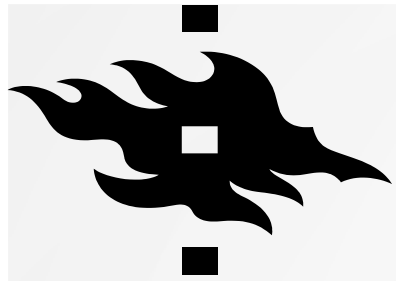


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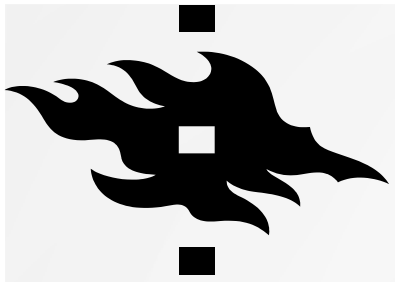


UNIVERSITIES' EU ADVOCACY WORK



WHY DO UNIVERSITIES ENGAGE IN EU-LEVEL ADVOCACY?

- **Influence EU funding and its priorities**
- **Shape the R&I environment/educational cooperation**
- **Advance a strategic interest (i.e Africa collaboration, Arctic research, mobility of researchers...)**
- **Bring research into policymaking (not primarily advocacy)**



CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

Be early: *Influence policy while there is still room to shape it*

Bring evidence: *Research and expertise provide credibility and substance*

Build alliances: *Collective voices carry further than individual institutions*

Know what matters: *Effective advocacy requires clear priorities and a long-term view*



COLLABORATION WITH DECISION-MAKERS

On this page, we provide information for decision-makers about the University of Helsinki and the collaboration opportunities it can offer. The University wants to make research-based knowledge available to society to serve as a basis for decision-making.

Get to know our views and activities



Statement on Commission proposal for EU's next Multiannual Financial Framework

Proposal to invest in knowledge-based Europe is a major step in the right direction.

[Read more](#)



Key Messages for Next Framework Programme (FP10)

Explore our positions on how The EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation should be developed.

[Read more](#)

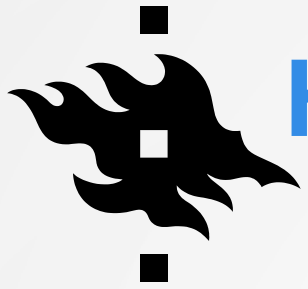


Goals for the upcoming EU election period

Europe's future-proofing and competitiveness will be built on a solid knowledge base

[Read more](#)





HOW UNIVERSITIES ARE REPRESENTED IN BRUSSELS

- **Direct representation:** their own Brussels office and/or dedicated staff
- **Joint representation:** together with cities, regions, universities or other partners
- **European university networks:** collective advocacy through **EUA, LERU, The Guild, Coimbra etc.**
- **Issue-based coalitions/networks:** partnerships around specific policy areas, disciplines, priorities etc.

*A permanent presence in Brussels is not essential but active engagement is!
Building relationships and trust requires regular contact with EU
policymakers and stakeholders.*

A scenic view of the Helsinki skyline at sunset, with the city's buildings and the dome of St. Nicholas Cathedral reflected in the calm water of the harbor. The sky is a mix of deep blue and orange hues.

#WeAreHelsinkiUni

THANK YOU!

Saara Harjula, EU Affairs Manager, Community relations
saara.harjula@helsinki.fi
@saara.harjula / @helsinkiuni

Paavo-Petri Ahonen

Ministry of Education and Culture

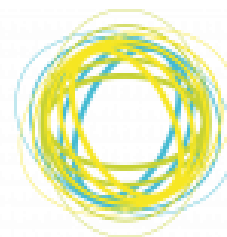
Paavo-Petri Ahonen, D.Sc. (Tech), M.Sc. (Eng), is Senior Ministerial Adviser in the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Finland. He works for the Department for Higher Education and Science Policy with science and R&D policy tasks as his main duties.

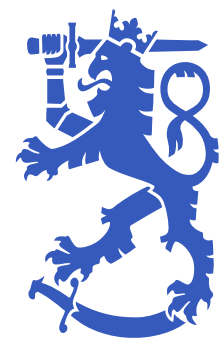
Dr. Ahonen is involved in several of the Ministry's international cooperation activities on RDI and education.

Prior to his current role, Dr. Ahonen worked as a senior science adviser and programme manager in the Research Council of Finland. He has also served as an expert at Gaia Consulting, and as a senior research scientist at VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland specializing in aerosol technology and nanomaterials.



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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE
FINLAND

Commentary by the Ministry of Education and Culture

Paavo-Petri Ahonen, UniPID webinar 25.8.2026



MoEC branches can have a significant role in the diversification of relations with African countries and actors, as well as increasing knowledge and interest of African countries within the Finnish society.

AU-EU High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation is a major intercontinental activity.

Veera Virmasalo

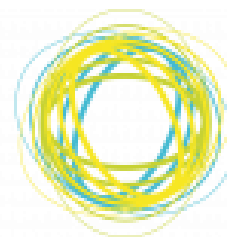
The Embassy of Finland in Pretoria

Veera Virmasalo is Science and Higher Education Counsellor at the Embassy of Finland in Pretoria, South Africa. She is part of the Finnish Ministry of Education's Team Finland Knowledge network, which comprises eight senior specialists stationed around the world.

In her role, Veera works to inform and connect Finnish and Southern African higher education and science stakeholders. Her own academic field is Communication for Social Change, an interdisciplinary field at the intersection of media and communication studies and development studies.



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COMMENT FROM FINLAND – SOUTHERN AFRICA RELATIONS POINT OF VIEW

UniPID Webinar: AU-EU science, technology and innovation collaboration for Finnish universities. 25.8.2026

Veera Virmasalo | Science and Higher Education Counsellor, Embassy of Finland in Pretoria

TEAM FINLAND KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

– our HE and Science counsellors
(a.k.a. the “TFK Specialists”)



OUR HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPES

FINLAND

Population ≈ 5.6M
15 – 24 population ≈ 0.62M
Share of youth ≈ 11%

38 Higher Edu Institutions
14 universities
24 unis of applied sciences

“SOUTHERN AFRICA”

SADC + Rwanda & Burundi = 18 countries

Population ≈ 434.6M
15 – 24 population ≈ 86.7M
Share of youth ≈ 20%

~ 130 public universities
250+ private universities



SUPPORT AVAILABLE

PRE-AWARD

Information: News, funding opportunities, partnership requests, and analysis through bi-weekly bulletins, monthly newsletters and thematic reports. *Info requests always welcome.*

Promotion: Science events, fairs and other opportunities for visibility and networking.

Connector: Identify potential partners across higher education, research, government, business and civil society.

Liaison: Facilitate access to relevant universities, government departments and other key stakeholders.

POST-AWARD

Visibility: Promote funded projects and partnerships as part of the Finnish–Southern African collaboration portfolio.

Practical support: Help funded projects anticipate visa issues before visa applications and travel.



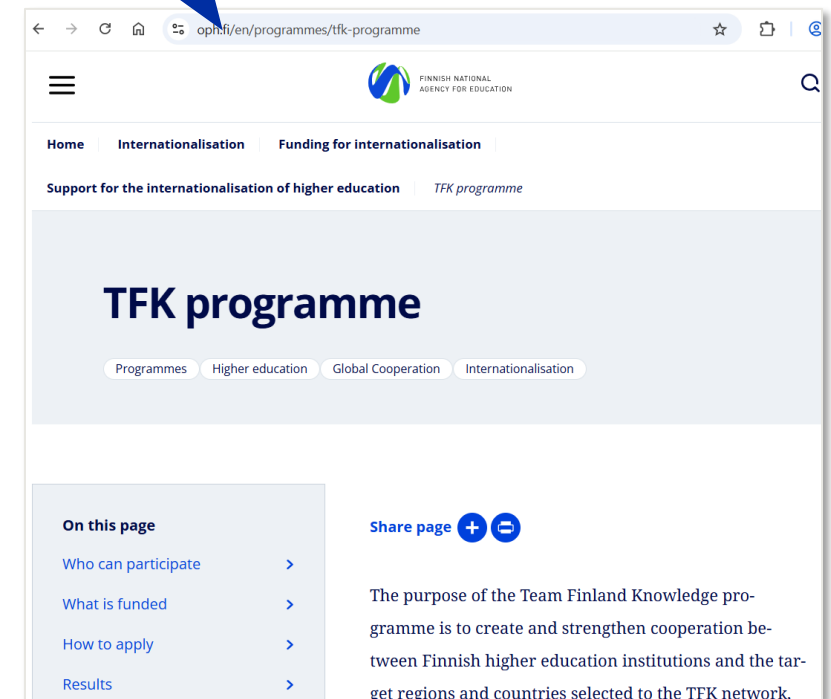
**SUOMI
FINLAND**

TFK FUNDING – A TOOL FOR BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

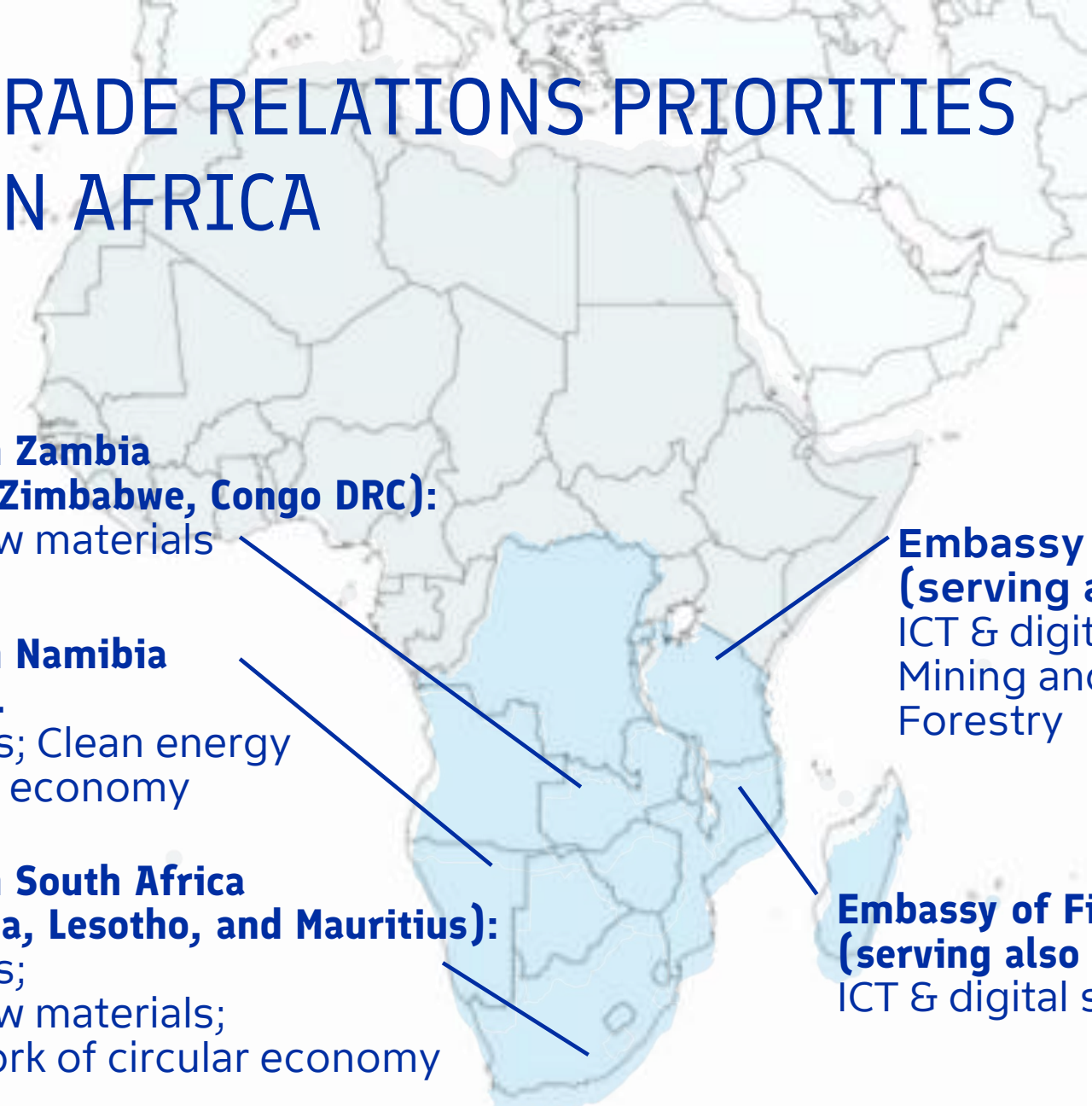
oph.fi/en/programmes/tfk-programme

Team Finland Knowledge (TFK) programme

- Funded by the Finnish National Agency for Education
- Modest funding for 2-year higher education cooperation projects between Finnish HEIs and HEIs in TFK regions
- Typically requires some prior collaboration
- Not research funding but can help deepen partnerships that may also lead to research collaboration
- Annual call usually opens Jan/Feb and closes at the end of April



FINLAND'S TRADE RELATIONS PRIORITIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

A map of Southern Africa is shown in the background. Five lines originate from text blocks on the left and right, pointing to specific countries on the map: Zambia, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Mozambique. The lines are dark blue and diagonal.

**Embassy of Finland in Zambia
(serving also Malawi, Zimbabwe, Congo DRC):**
Mining and critical raw materials

**Embassy of Finland in Namibia
(serving also Angola):**
ICT & digital solutions; Clean energy
& clean tech; Circular economy

**Embassy of Finland in South Africa
(serving also Botswana, Lesotho, and Mauritius):**
ICT & digital solutions;
Mining and critical raw materials;
Water in the framework of circular economy

**Embassy of Finland in Tanzania
(serving also Burundi & Rwanda):**
ICT & digital solutions;
Mining and critical raw materials;
Forestry

**Embassy of Finland in Mozambique
(serving also Madagascar & Eswatini):**
ICT & digital solutions

**SUOMI
FINLAND**

AFRICAN UNION (AU) RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2034 ([STISA](#))

Priority sectors

- Agriculture
- Health
- ICT
- Energy
- Environment

Cross-cutting priorities

- Industrialization
- Human capital infrastructure and skills
- Frontier & emerging technologies
- Science diplomacy & partnerships
- Private sector engagement
- Youth & gender engagement



WHAT MAKES A PARTNERSHIP ATTRACTIVE?

Mutual research interests

A genuine scientific fit, not participation added to meet a call requirement.

Complementary strengths

Southern African partners bring research expertise, infrastructure, research environments, networks and locally grounded knowledge.

Institutional priorities

Partnerships work better when they align with what the institutions themselves are trying to achieve.

Longer-term relationships

Interest extends beyond participation in a single funded project.

Data is not simply a project resource

Agree ownership, governance, access and future use with partners from the outset.

Nice people, good communication

Keep partners in the loop, including during periods when little is happening.



FROM CALL TO JOINT PROPOSAL

Engage partners early

Not after the consortium, concept and main roles have already been decided.

Interpret the call together

Discuss what the call means in the different contexts and what each partner can contribute.

Build meaningful roles

All parties should be equal partners in shaping the approach and having substantive roles in the work packages and decision-making.

Budget for genuine participation

Ensure resources match responsibilities – including mobility, coordination and other costs of participation.

Agree the fundamentals early (talk vs. just assuming)

Roles, data governance, IP, authorship/publications and expectations beyond the project.



COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

- **Leave a message in the Chat** (your name, university, faculty, collaboration interest)
- **Request matchmaking form**
veera.virmasalo@gov.fi
- **Join Southern Africa TFK mailing list**
email veera.virmasalo@gov.fi
(your name; academic title; position; university; faculty; any additional information you would like to share)
- **Send info / request to mailing list**
email veera.virmasalo@gov.fi
(keep messages brief)
- **LinkedIn** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/team-finland-knowledge-southern-africa>



Thank you.

Veera Virmasalo

Higher Education and Science Specialist

Team Finland Knowledge / Embassy of Finland in Pretoria

Veera.virmasalo@gov.fi

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/team-finland-knowledge-southern-africa>



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Minna Tanskanen

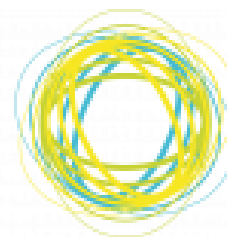
Minna Tanskanen, Department of Geographical and Historical Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies, University of Eastern Finland, Finland, [Vice Dean](#)

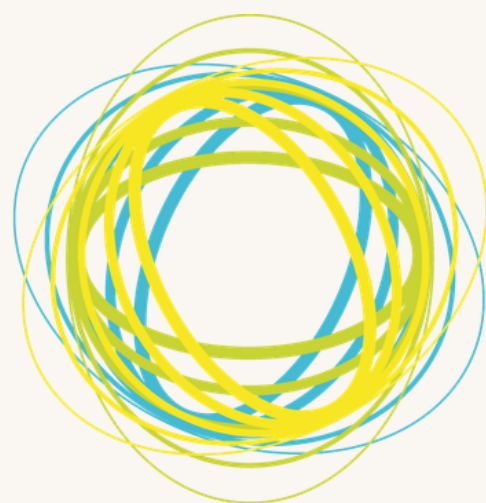
Minna Tanskanen, Ph.D., works as vice dean responsible for education at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies and as senior university lecturer at the Department of Geographical and Historical Studies, the University of Eastern Finland.

Her research interests include the study of environmental social sciences, landscape geography, and didactics of geography. Through the Erasmus projects, she has been doing international teaching development work for over 20 years.

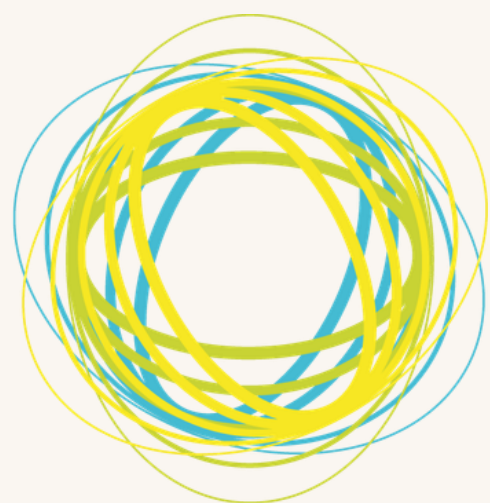


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Q & A



Thank you!
