

African Diaspora Scientists Federation: Leveraging Science and Technology to Benefit Africans

Science and technology are transforming our society and it is clear that we all in the world are benefiting from it including African populations. Nonetheless, African populations could be considered as the least benefiting of science and technology in the world. To fully benefit from science and technology, African countries should invest massively in the training of scientists in the goal to respond competently at the local level to some science-based issues, such as climate change and disease outbreaks, for example. In the past two decades, African governments have increased, still insufficiently, their investment in tertiary education in the goal to drive the continent's growth through the implementation of sustainable technological capabilities. However, after the training of the future talents, African countries face difficulties to retain some of their scientists or students in science due to the lack of resources and opportunities in science for ambitious young scientists in a competitive world. This situation leads "automatically" to brain drain. Yet, it is possible to reverse or attenuate this brain drain situation. To do so, we are calling for active promotion of brain circulation in Africa coming especially from African scientists who are living in countries rich with cutting-edge technologies.



Our organization, African Diaspora Scientists Federation (ADSF) aims to provide a platform where volunteer African Scientists in the diaspora, through an intra and inter-disciplinary collaborative manner, could respond to consultation requests from African governments and non-governmental organization (NGOs) on specific topics by providing analysis and opinions. Our second program, Science Experience and Career Path Exchange (SECPE), is a self-directed mentoring program that gives us the opportunity to be matched 1:1 with a mentor, or mentee from our database. The program provides a digital platform where we can form new connections, learn, and collaborate from peers residing in the diaspora or Africa, by sharing career advice and experiences. This program is designed to boost and build scientific confidence among the next generation of African scientists at an early age. Our last program, called Share 1 h of Your Science During Holidays, aims to organize and integrate one hour of a seminar for African scientists in their holiday schedule while visiting Africa. ADSF is responsible to organize the seminar by finding an interested institution and African scientists traveling for vacation and then organize the seminar. This program is designed to foster collaboration between African scientists in the diaspora and African scientists in Africa.

At ADSF, we are calling for African diaspora scientists to take the leadership on African science and technology implementation and development, which we believe would contribute to Africa prosperity through science and technology. In view of their background, African diaspora scientists are the most untapped African science and technology advocacy group. These scientists might advocate for science and technology development alongside African leaders and shape the paths for the setting up of rigorous science policies in Africa. Our platform is active and we are welcoming new members to join our initiative and inspire the next generation of African scientists.

Please visit us at <https://www.adsf.club> and join us to speed up Africa transformation through science and technology.

Learn more here
<https://www.frontrunnersinnovate.com/african-diaspora-scientists-federation-leveraging-science-and-technology-to-benefit-africans/>

Leveraging Science and Technology to Benefit Africans Populations through African Diaspora Scientists Federation initiative

We were honored to share our ongoing efforts to create a dynamic platform of African diaspora scientists on brain circulation in Africa at the US National Science Policy

Symposium 2019 at University of Wisconsin Madison. African scientists in the diaspora, join us today and share your knowledge by mentoring a student in science in Africa and/or collaborate with a peer in Africa <https://lnkd.in/dcnDCD7>. Contact us at contact@adsf.club

#NSPS2019 #Africa #Diaspora #scienceandtechnology
#Globalscience #sciencepolicy #shareyourknowledge
#africandiaspora with Rafiou Agoro, Eng. PhD

African diaspora scientists as development catalysts

National Science Policy Symposium: Rockefeller University New York on November 10th, 2018

It was with great pleasure, Rafiou Agoro, PhD presents our investigation highlighting African diaspora as development catalysts at the National Science Policy Network at Rockefeller University in New York City. #networking #catalyst #africandiaspora #sciencepolicy #sciencediplomacy #Africa #beyondthelab.

Contact ADSF to learn more about our activities: contact@adsf.club

Dr. Boateng, an African

scientist in China with a vision to increase research in oil and gas exploration techniques in Africa

At 35, Dr. Cyril D. Boateng was born in a town called Ho in Ghana. While growing up, he did not have scientist role model but decided to pursue a STEM career while attending high school without having a clear idea of where his choice will land him. In general he was looking for a career which will provide the opportunity for lifelong reading and learning.

The Ghanaian scientist started his scientific career as a senior instructor at Kumasi Technical University where he taught for 6 years. Then he was awarded the prestigious CAS-TWAS Presidential fellowship from the Chinese Academy of Sciences to pursue PhD studies in Geophysics. Currently, he is pursuing scientific research in exploration geophysics specifically designing new methods of imaging complex oil and gas reservoirs.

Importantly, the methodologies he has developed can help in improving the exploration and exploitation of oil and gas resources in Africa.

Always professional at work, Dr. Boateng's typical working day involves writing scientific articles, writing and testing codes and generating ideas for his research. For Cyril, It is not a myth to have the same working schedule in Africa. He continues, "I do not think it is a myth to have this typical work life in Africa. It only takes a few resources and data from government and private companies to set up the same sort of research capability in any African country. I tend to think it is more dependent on commitment than resources".

For his next career move, Dr. Boateng plans to get back to Africa. He left Africa to improve his skills in Geophysics

because; resources for his research were not available in Ghana. Currently, Dr Boateng has acquired important and critical knowledge in the field of Geophysics and he is ready to move back to implement his scientific skills in Ghana and train the next generation of scientists to prevent young scientists and students in science in Africa from experiencing the same challenges he faced during his STEM education. Definitely, Dr. Boateng is a change maker and we wish him all the best and a bright future.

To the question about how African scientists in the diaspora could contribute to improve science and technology in Africa, Dr. Boateng emphasizes on the necessity to go to Africa to change the narrative and improve the systems in African universities and research institutions. For the of scientists who are already established in the diaspora, Dr. Boateng suggests a collaborative initiative between scientists in the diaspora and scientists in Africa. For Dr. Boateng, if Africa has to become a very attractive and developed continent, Africans have to change and transform their universities and research institutions capabilities in terms of scientific research. From these institutions, many innovative ideas should emerge to efficiently tackle Africa's problems.

Dr. Boateng has some final advice for the future generation of African scientists in Diaspora.

"Let's all go home and change the narrative. If I had a wish, it will be making sure majority of Africans will do their postgraduate studies in Africa and use this knowledge to solve Africa's problems. Currently, we send our best and brightest to solve the problems of other countries because we do not have good postgraduate programs. And when they are done, the host nations keep them".

Online conferences: an alternative to on-site conference attendance? How does it affect our networking potential?

As a collective body of graduate students and postdocs, we can all agree that conference registration fees are expensive and there are no signs of a paradigm shift. I am still asking myself, why is this the case and will it ever change? So far, we have yet to mention the additional costs associated with attending a conference in person such as accommodation, flights, food, and ground transportation. The conference experience can be challenging and funding travel for trainees is often dictated by the training environment or situation. From a trainee perspective, traditional avenues for travel e.g. hotels or taxis are often expensive with hotel costs being as high as \$250 for a single night that you may only spend 8 hours in. Often, trainees look for alternative and cost reducing approaches such as Airbnb and Uber/Lyft to name a few popular options (other alternatives may exist). All the above is trying to highlight that conference travel cost does not stop at registration. Yet, trainees appreciate the importance of gaining conference experience as it is critical for their career development. However, it comes at a financial cost.

Therefore, in the coming years, I will not be surprised to see more graduate students and postdocs opt for attending conferences online through a live stream channel, instead of a traditional on-site attendance. Similar to webinars, live streaming only requires a computer and can be done from the comforts of your own desk, sofa, or, city. Therefore, this

approach can be convenient in term of cost. Registration expenses is often cheaper, and this excludes any additional discount costs for being a trainee. However, despite the apparent cost saving benefits, are we sacrificing an essential part of conferences – networking? How may attending conferences via live streaming affect our ability to meet our peers or future collaborators? Below are a few next steps on how to get started in the online world of conferences, followed by a few tips to help tailor your networking approach to an online platform.

Step 1: Check your availability to attend.

If yes, ask the organizers to confirm that the relevant sessions to your interests and research are available as a live stream option.

Step 2: Plan the conference.

Upon registering, make sure you reserve sufficient time on your calendar to attend your preferred sessions. With the flexibility of where we choose to attend the conference from, completing lab tasks between sessions maybe convenient, however; it is still important to engage in the conference. I believe many of us do well at prioritizing lab tasks as these are often checkable and defined goals, but when attending an online conference, it may be worth considering having an accountability system setup to make sure we keep to our conference goals.

How can we network from these type of events?

Networking tip 1: Identify several presenters with whom you would like to interact and network.

Networking tip 2: Engage conversation with peers and colleagues: do not hesitate to ask questions virtually. If this does not exist in real time, follow up with the presenter shortly afterwards (24 h maximum) by emailing the presenter

and ask them about a specific question. Referencing the session you attended virtually may help initiate the conversation, followed by your question to engage conversation.

Networking tip 3: Leverage the physical attendance of other individuals from your institution to gain a different perspective and help initiate a discussion on topics you both have learned from the conference.

Networking tip 4: Engage on the conference social media platform. This may help you connect and interact with other attendees. Twitter often has a large social media presence during conferences therefore, it can be a useful tool to keep up to speed with conference activities and connect with other professional. Physical location does not prevent you from interacting with the virtual world. Consider designating calendar time at the end of the day, maybe 30 – 60 minutes to cover all the potential social activities you might have missed. Following the societies twitter feed on social media can be an easy way to catch up with all the important information.

Let's teach our children science in their own languages

<https://sciafmag.com/2019/10/31/lets-teach-our-children-science-in-their-own-languages/>

African Diaspora Scientists as Development Catalysts



African development challenges remain one of the most difficult to overcome in world. To address these challenges, Africa countries should invest massively in the training of scientists in the goal to respond competently to theirs problems. Instead of that, African governments have a lot of difficulties to retain some of their scientists or students in science due to the lack of resources and opportunities in science for ambitious young scientists. This situation leads to brain drain. However, it is possible to reverse or attenuate this brain drain situation. For instance, a promotion of brain circulation in Africa which comes especially from African scientists who are living in cutting-edge technologies countries could be an important problem-solving factor. Here is suggested a unique described role of African diaspora scientists to take the leadership on African science and technology development, thus contributing to Africa prosperity through science. In view of their status and background, these scientists might advocate for science and technology development with African leaders and shape the paths for the setting up of rigorous science policies in Africa. Also, here is suggested the creation of African diaspora scientists federation, a structure which might help their members to develop intra and inter-disciplinary collaborative projects. As African diaspora scientists, I am calling to the creation of African diaspora scientist's federation as a framework for the actions devoted for African science and technology development. This platform should also represent a powerful tool for science advocacy in Africa.

For more information
<http://www.sciencediplomacy.org/article/2018/african-diaspora-scientists-development-catalysts>