

Europe-Africa Research & Innovation News

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EDCTP2 approved with €683 million for clinical trials in Sub-Saharan Africa

6 May 2014 – Brussels: The European Council has approved a €683 million (US\$930 million) budget for the second phase of the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) for medical research in Sub-Saharan Africa. One month earlier the European Parliament had approved the new programme overwhelmingly. This sum will be matched by participating European states.

The budget of EDCTP2 is over 3 times higher than for the previous phase and its scope is broader: extending beyond the major infectious diseases (HIV/AIDS, TB & malaria) to include neglected infectious diseases, and now encompassing additional phases of clinical trials (from phase I to IV) of new or improved diagnostics, drugs, vaccines and microbicides.

The official launch of EDCTP2 will take place in Cape Town on 1 December 2014.

In the meantime, EDCTP held its 7th Forum in Berlin from 30 June to 2 July 2014 (see web site).

See: www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/african_union/press_corner/all_news/news/2014/20140515_en.htm
Further information: www.edctp.org & www.edctpforum.org

IST-Africa 2014 conference

6-9 May 2014 – Mauritius: The conference IST-Africa 2014, hosted by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology and the National Computer Board of Mauritius and supported by the EC and AUC, was the ninth in an annual series of ministerial level technology research conferences. It was attended over 460 delegates from 44 countries. See web site for conference report.

The conference was also the opportunity for Horizon 2020 information workshop, as well as a special training session for official or potential National Contact Points (NCPs) from 19 African countries.

For more: www.ist-africa.org/conference2014/

Second African Innovation Outlook surveys research investments and performance

16 May 2014 – Pretoria: The second African Innovation Outlook (AIO) was published as part of the African Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (ASTII), which was set up to address the lack of relevant indicators that are needed to formulate policy. The survey was prepared by NEPAD, the New Partnership for Africa's Development Agency, with the support of the Swedish international development cooperation agency (SIDA). It covers 21 countries, although in many cases the data is incomplete. Only five countries provided a complete picture: Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa & Uganda. Among the more interesting findings is the rapid rise of Kenya's R&D spending, which is almost at 1% of GDP, while Uganda's seems to have dropped significantly and South Africa's also declined, as reported in EARI News in February.

The first line of the executive summary recalls that "*STI are engines of growth in any economy.*"

see: www.nepad.org/humancapitaldevelopment/knowledge/doc/3330/african-innovation-outlook-ii

CAAST-Net Plus Regional Workshop on Climate Change

29-30 May 2014 – Kigali: This CAAST-Net Plus Regional Workshop aimed to build a platform to foster bi-regional research around climate change priorities. Researchers from Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and Europe gathered to discuss their activities and views. Conclusions: better collaboration requires fuller involvement of (and contribution from) African participants in EU-funded collaborative research projects; building capacity in SSA countries so they can act as equal partners; better awareness of funding opportunities and support through NCPs; better coordination of intra-African cooperation; working within regional structures, including partnerships with national councils and commissions for S&T; concentrate more on outcomes, rather than outputs, and ensure better communication with policy-makers.

The workshop was preceded by a Horizon 2020 information workshop for Rwanda on 28 May 2014.

Further information: www.caast-net-plus.org/object/event/818

Kwame Nkrumah 2014 Scientific Awards launched

12 June 2014 – Addis Ababa: The Kwame Nkrumah 2014 Scientific Awards were launched, inviting candidates for both the Regional Award for Women and the Continental Award. The AUC is keen to see higher numbers of quality applicants from all 5 regions of Africa and at continental level. The aim of the Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards is to raise the recognition of scientists on the African continent. Applications and supporting documents must be delivered to the implementing authority for each award category. Full details of the rules of procedure and application forms are available on the AUC web site. Deadlines: Regional Award for Women – 30 October 2014. Continental Award – 15 November 2014.

See: <http://hrst.au.int/en/content/2014-edition-african-union-kwame-nkrumah-scientific-awards>

Joint European and African R&I Agenda on Waste Management

18 June 2014 – Brussels: A vision document has been published and a website launched to develop a joint European and African Research and Innovation Agenda on Waste Management to promote collaborative research in this field. This builds on two workshops in 2013 in Addis Ababa and Brussels.

See: <http://jointeuauwasteworkshop.teamwork.fr/>

AU Summit approves STISA-2024 and the establishment of AOSTI

27 June 2014 – Malabo: AU heads of states and governments approved the Science, Technology & Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024) proposed by AMCOST, encouraging member states to integrate it into their national programmes; as well as the statutes enabling the formal establishment of the African Observatory for STI (AOSTI), which is hosted by Equatorial Guinea in Malabo.

Showcasing EU-Africa collaboration in Research in Health – where several FP7 projects have provided leads for studies funded by EDCTP, in this case against tuberculosis.

ORCHID – a project to develop and optimise drugs against tuberculosis

Aim: to take lead compounds for the treatment of TB for development and optimisation into candidates for pre-clinical development, with the aim of arriving to a single compound for clinical trials. This FP7 project ran from 2011 to 2014 with an EU contribution of €5.35 million. It was led by GlaxoSmithKline with 8 other European partners and 4 International partners, and it led to an EDCTP-funded clinical trial of β -lactams for the treatment of tuberculosis in South Africa. [<http://projectorchid.org/>]

TB-VAC & NEWTBVAC – 2 projects to design & test vaccine candidates against tuberculosis

These FP7 projects ran from 2004 to 2009 and 2010 to 2014 with total EU contribution of €29 million. Led by TBVI with numerous European partners and several African partners, these projects contributed to several EDCTP grants to carry out clinical trials. [www.tbvi.eu/projects/newtbvac.html]

Upcoming events:

- 6-10 July – Gaborone, Botswana: **2014 SARIMA conference** (www.sarimaconference.co.za)
- 6-7 July – Gaborone: **Horizon 2020 information workshop** (www.sarimaconference.co.za)
- 10 July – Maputo, Mozambique: **Horizon 2020 information workshop**
- 25-26 September – Luanda, Angola: **Horizon 2020 information workshop**
- 7 October – Meeting of **EU-Africa HLPD expert working group** on food security research
- 11-12 November – Lusaka, Zambia: **UbuntuNet-Connect 2014** (www.ubuntunet.net/uc2014_cfp)
- 1-3 December – Cape Town, South Africa: **Launch of EDCTP2** (www.edctp.org)

Website of EU Delegation to the African Union (AU): http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/african_union

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