

IMPACT HE

Leadership and Stakeholder Forum:

“African universities driving local development: Visibility, advocacy, impact”

6-7 May, 2026

Nairobi, Kenya

Background

IMPACT HE is an Erasmus+ CBHE project that aims to support higher education institutions and ministries in Kenya and Ethiopia to 1) strengthen ownership and management of international projects funds, and 2) ultimately demonstrate societal impact of international cooperation in a meaningful and localized manner. The project was inspired by “Team Europe” approaches to international cooperation and the ‘S-DHG’ annual forum (Forum for Sustainable Development in Higher Education) of funders in higher education and research cooperation. It is coordinated by OBREAL; DAAD, EDUFI and VLIR-UOS are associated partners and part of the steering committee: <https://impacthe.obreal.org/>. These actors are also key implementing partners of Component 1 of Study and Research in Africa, under DAAD’s coordination (‘SRiA’ - a new European Union initiative).

About this event

This two-day event will be a high-level leadership and policy forum, that will frame the IMPACT HE project. It is timed to coincide with the forthcoming launch of SRiA and hence will integrate important awareness raising and policy elements linked to SRiA as well. The event is designed to discuss and promote key project messages from IMPACT HE and relevant policy topics:

- Measuring and communicating impact of development cooperation in higher education
- Ownership of higher education cooperation projects and wider societal and economic implications
- African capacity to lead and mutually beneficial partnerships (Africa-EU and intra-Africa)
- African universities as agents for local and regional development
- ‘Team Europe’ in knowledge, research, education and African leadership perspectives

This event targets university leadership from the project partner institutions and representatives of major higher education associations as networks (AAU – also part of SRiA, IUCEA, SARUA, ARUA, ANIE, CAMES, for example). It will also target policy makers (ministries from the target countries and further afield in East Africa, Regional Economic Communities and the African Union Commission). EU partners at the level of associations and funding agencies, such as VLIR-UOS, EDUFI, DAAD and other members of the SRiA team and of the ‘S-DHG’ group will be engaged.

**Online presence will be accommodated but the forum will not be fully hybrid.*

Draft Agenda

Monday 4 May

**Training workshop for internationalization and project/funding management: IMPACT HE (Invite only)*

Tuesday 5 May

**Training workshop for internationalization and project/funding management: IMPACT HE (Invite only)*

**Arrival of high-level participants of leadership and policy forum*

**Arrival SRiA participants and partners*

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Wednesday 6 May

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9h30	Official Opening Session	Dr. Henriette Geiger, Ambassador of the EU to Kenya Prof. Shaukat Abdulrazak, Principal Secretary, State Department for Science Research and Innovation, Kenya Elizabeth Colucci, Director for Education Policy and Programs, Obreal
	Good will messages: Team Europe in practice	Maija Airas, EDUFI, Finland Jan Kennis, VLIRUOS, Belgium Michael Hoerig, DAAD, Germany H.E. Vincenzo Del Monaco, Ambassador of Italy to Kenya, on behalf of Uni-Italia
10:15	Opening Keynote 1: Impact of cooperation projects in an evolving global landscape – higher education as an economic and social development agent	Keynote 1: Prof. Vasey Mwaja, Vice Chair, African Scientific Research and Innovation Council (ASRIC) <i>Chair: Apiyo Okwiri, Obreal</i>
	<i>Audience interaction</i>	
11:00	<i>Group Photo and Coffee</i>	
11:15	IMPACT HE: Opportunities for showcasing African universities as local impact agents	

	<i>Introductory presentation</i>	Mahaman Bachir Saley, Officer, Science, Technology and Space Division, Directorate ESTI, African Union Commission
	<i>About IMPACT HE</i>	Presentation of project video (2 min)
	<i>Panel of project partner representatives</i>	Dr. Ir. Huub L.M. Mudde, Director, MSM, Netherlands Dr. Jemal Abafita Ababulgu, President, Jimma University, Ethiopia Prof. Emily Achieng Akuno, Vice Chancellor, JOOUST, Kenya Dr. Kemal Ibrahim, Vice President for Academic Affairs, AASTU, Ethiopia <i>Chair: Carsten Lorz, HWST, Germany</i>
12:15	Showcasing impact: Good practices from EU partner cooperation programmes	Maija Airas, EDUFI, Finland Jan Kennis, VLIRUOS, Belgium Stephanie Oberheidt, DAAD
13:00	Lunch	
14:15	Keynote 2: Impact of cooperation projects in an evolving global landscape – higher education as an economic and social development agent (Part 2)	Speaker: Prof. Emnet Tadesse Woldegeorgis, University of Johannesburg (online)
15:00	African universities as development agents: The role of associations and networks <i>Panel discussion highlighting specific programmes and projects led by major associations and networks</i>	Intro presentation: Olusola Oyewole, Secretary General, Association of African Universities (AAU) Prof. Stephan Simukanga, Executive Director, SARUA Prof. Idris Rai, Acting Executive Secretary, IUCEA Prof. Jane Ambuko, Director Research and Training, ARUA Prof. Ali Doumma, Director of Programmes and responsible for CCI (Comités Consultatifs Interafricains), CAMES <i>Chair: Elizabeth Colucci, OBREAL</i>
16:15	Coffee	
16:30	African universities as development agents: Policy <i>Panel discussion with regional and continental policy actors' perspectives</i>	Robin Sannassee, SPO Education, Skills, Development, SADC Dr. Dorcas Omukhulu, East Africa Community (EAC) Mahaman Bachir Saley, Directorate for ESTI, African Union Commission Behailu Korma, Ministry of Education, Ethiopia

		<i>Chair: Dr. Daniel Karanja, State Department for Science Research and Innovation, Kenya</i>
17:30	Close	
19:30	<i>Official dinner: Sponsored by VLIRUOS</i> <i>Venue: Safari Park Hotel</i>	

Thursday, May 7

Morning- Leadership Forum Continued

9:30	Leveraging EU funding and Team Europe approaches for impact	
	<i>Short presentations DG INTPA/ EU DEL</i> <i>Short presentation of case study on Team Europe approach</i>	Ondrej Simek, Deputy Head of Delegation, Delegation of the European Union to Kenya
	African stakeholder panel	James Jowi, ANIE Dr. Jakie Kado, Executive Director, Network of African Science Academies, NASAC Prof. Dickson Andala, Chief Executive Officer, National Research Fund, Kenya Huba Boshoff, Higher Education expert, South Africa <i>Chair: Jan Kennis, VLIRUOS, Belgium</i>
11:30	<i>Coffee</i>	
12:00	Study and Research in Africa? Advocacy, communications and visibility for African universities	<i>Chair: Michael Hoerig, DAAD</i> Prof. Olusola Oyewole, Secretary General, AAU Alexandre Regina, University Officer, Cooperation and Cultural Affairs Department, Embassy of France in Kenya and in Somalia Dr. Fabio Santoni, Scientific Attaché, Embassy of Italy to Kenya, on behalf of Uni-Italia
13:00	Main take-aways and future steps	
	<i>Event conclusions</i> <i>Short video "Interregional Dialogue on Cooperation and Development"</i> <i>Closing Remarks</i>	Chair: Elizabeth Colucci and Apiyo Okwiri, Obreal Dr. Beatrice Inyangala, CBS - State Department for Higher Education, Kenya
13:30	Close and Lunch	

Afternoon

14:30 – 16:00

Public information session:

“Study and Research in Africa: What to expect”

**Public information session open to wider Kenya HE community and participants of the leadership forum.*

- Engage stakeholders in **promoting Africa as a destination for study and research**
- Identify **practical actions, partnerships, and opportunities**
- Clarify **roles of participating institutions and stakeholders**

14:30 – 14:45	Welcome and Opening Remarks Key points: • Introduce the purpose of the meeting • Brief overview of the initiative: What it aims to achieve
14:45 – 15:20	Introduction to the “Study and Research in Africa” Initiative : Key outputs Key themes: • Key component and deliverables • Key stakeholders and their roles • Expected impact on African universities and global partnerships
15:20 – 15:55	Moderated Discussion: Strengthening the Initiative Guiding questions: • What practical actions are needed to promote study and research in Africa? • What partnerships are critical for success?
16:00	Closing Remarks and Next Steps

Friday, 8 May

Parallel meetings with stakeholder organisations regarding Study And Research in Africa (SRiA)

Schedule tbc – to be announced to partner organisations.

**Invite only*