

AEROAFRICA-EU

Promoting European-South African Research Co-operation in Aeronautics and Air Transport



State of the Art - Background

South Africa's (SA) relationship with the European Union (EU) is a strategic partnership in science and technology, marked by long-standing political, economic and development co-operation ties. Collaborative initiatives in the past have brought about not just the enhancement of the international knowledge base, but real improvement in the quality of lives of both Europeans and South Africans.

Both the EU and SA have recognised the importance of the aeronautics sector as a driver of innovation and competitiveness across the industrial base, and the EU is SA's largest research and development (R&D) partner in the aeronautics and air transport domains.

There are common aims and objectives between both entities and the SA industry is becoming increasingly more integrated with the European aeronautics community.

AeroAfrica-EU aims to promote European and South African research co-operation in aeronautics and air transport. A platform will be created to enhance co-operation between these two entities and the potential for the participation of other African countries will also be explored. The project is supported by the EU's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) under the Work Programme AAT.2008.7.6 'Stimulating research with international co-operation partner countries'.

Objectives

The overall objectives for AeroAfrica-EU are:

- to explore the potential for enhancing co-operation through an analysis (mapping) of aeronautics and air transport R&D co-operation between the EU and SA, as well as other African countries;
- to develop and enhance networks and partnerships between the EU, SA and other African researchers and organisations in identified technical themes ideally suited for mutually beneficial aeronautics and air transport R&D co-operation;
- to promote SA and African participation in the aeronautics and air transport activities of FP7 through focused information and advisory services;
- to establish an aeronautics and air transport R&D policy dialogue between the EU and SA, as well as other African partners, so as to also support economic and development co-operation.

Description of Work

WP 1: Mapping the aeronautics and air transport landscape: interactions will be collated and analysed in the following categories:

- R&D competences in Africa governmental, research and private sectors;
- collaborations such as FP projects, bilateral initiatives, etc.;
- the 'enabling environment' (co-operation, legislative frameworks, etc.);
- specific SA/African R&D strengths;
- political, economic or development co-operation imperatives;
- Funding mechanisms.

Workshops will be held to discuss the mapping and identify further areas for co-operation. The project website will also facilitate communication and dissemination to a broad audience.

WP 2: Developing and enhancing networks and partnerships: SA researchers and institutions will be actively promoted to their EU counterparts through thematic workshops, awareness sessions, and international aeronautics and air transport conferences.

WP 3: Consolidating and mobilising towards supporting FP7: by encouraging African aeronautics researchers to participate in FP7, achieved through a portal on the project website.

WP 4: Identifying and demonstrating mutual interest and benefit in R&D co-operation: by creating a policy framework to allow stakeholders in the aeronautics and air transport research environment to discuss issues of relevance, identify areas of co-operation and define mechanisms to foster greater collaboration.

Expected Results

The results of this project will be:

- enhanced networking and partnering in the aeronautics R&D community, specifically facilitating external communication and raising awareness. Workshops hosted in Europe and in Africa will be utilised to showcase this project and European/African research projects;
- improved collaboration between EU and SA/ African countries. The intention is to prepare a policy paper on the links between aeronautics and air transport R&D co-operation with political, economic and development co-operation between Africa and Europe.
- increased participation in FP7 by SA and African aeronautics researchers. The project will provide assistance and information on the functioning of FP7, and offer access to knowledge and expertise to aid successful participation in FP7;
- leveraged co-operative relationships through the joint identification of needs and priorities.



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